

NELSON AND THE TARANAKI WAR, 1860-1861

A Case-Study of Opinion in the South Island
on the Origins and Nature of the Anglo-Maori
Wars in New Zealand.

A thesis, presented in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of
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PREFACE

Though the origins of the Anglo-Maori wars, their influence on Imperial relations, and their effects on the Maoris have been studied by Professors Sinclair, Dalton and Sorrenson, and by Dr Alan Ward, there has been very little attempt to study colonial opinion on the wars, or of the effects of the wars on settler politics. Historians have not found it surprising that an aggressive policy should have appealed to large sections of the colonists in the North Island, but they have been more surprised both by the bellicose attitude of the South Island colonist towards the Maories and by the parsimonious attitude of the Southerners when it came to helping to pay for the wars with the Maoris.

The original intention of this thesis was to study the South Island opinion on native affairs in general and on the Anglo-Maori wars in particular. I intended to attempt to trace the origins of the bellicose attitude of the South Island colonist towards the Maori back to the colonist's Victorian origins, his motivations for emigrating, and his disillusionment caused by the disparity between his expectations and the harsh realities of the colonial situation. Further, an attempt was to be made to explain the parsimonious attitude of the South Island colonists to the financing of native policy and later to the payment of war costs. Here, preoccupation with local interests and problems, and the jealous concern to preserve the

provincial land funds, the symbols of provincial wealth, were seen as possible explanations. However, as research progressed two things became increasingly apparent. First, South Island opinion as an identifiable entity that could be labelled "South Island" was fast becoming submerged beneath a welter of opinions held by individuals, by local interest groups and now and then distinguishable as a provincial opinion. There was an opinion in the South Island on the Anglo-Maori wars but there was no South Island opinion as such. Secondly, the reaction of the Nelson settlers to the news of the commencement of hostilities in Taranaki and the opinion on the war expressed by the two Nelson newspapers had an edge and a quality to them lacking in the reactions and opinions discernable in other South Island settlements.

The choice of Nelson as a case-study of opinion in the South Island on the Anglo-Maori wars may also be justified on other grounds. First, unlike Otago and Canterbury, Nelson was a needy rather than a wealthy province, Nelson's land fund was relatively insignificant. Thus there is need to seek for other explanations of the opinion expressed in Nelson. Secondly, the Nelson newspapers were not only the most vocal in the South Island on the war question, but they had differing approaches to the question. Given the partisan nature of colonial newspapers the possibility arises that the differences in approach may be explained in terms of local political conflict. Thirdly, during the period under consideration,

Nelson, represented by Edward Stafford, enjoyed the possession of power in colonial politics. This suggests the possibility that opinion in Nelson may be linked with support of the Stafford "war" ministry. Therefore a study of opinion in Nelson on the Anglo-Maori wars may not only enable us to understand the bellicose attitude of the colonist in the South Island but may throw some light on the nature of the political conflict in New Zealand during the Provincial Period.

A topic in the history of race relations or one concerning attitudes towards racial groups can be rather difficult for the non-European; especially one who was first attracted to the study of history by a need to try and understand, without bitterness, the behaviour of Europeans towards his own people in his native land during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The intention of the first two chapters is to attempt to understand the superior attitude adopted by the South Island colonists towards the Maoris by attempting to understand the mind of the emigrant and the condition of the Maori as the emigrant found him. If our view of the early pioneers is a realistic rather than an idealistic one then their behaviour and attitudes are easier to understand.

The settler in the South Island, where there was little to fear from the Maoris, was more concerned with his own progress and the problems of building a European society than with native

problems. The native problems of the North Island were treated at best as a distraction and at worse as of no concern of the South. Chapters Three to Five attempt to show how one South Island community attempted to deal with a distraction that became a nuisance.

The basic sources for this thesis have been the files of the two Nelson newspapers. It is unfortunate that there is no reliable way of ascertaining the writers of any particular editorial. Further, manuscript collections were searched for letters from South Island, and in particular Nelson, residents, and for references to conditions and attitudes in Nelson.

This thesis is presented merely as a case-study and its generalizations await testing against the experiences in other communities.

* * * *

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<u>AJHR</u>	<u>Appendices to the Journals of the New Zealand House of Representatives</u>
<u>CS</u>	<u>Canterbury Standard</u>
<u>DNZB</u>	<u>Dictionary of New Zealand Biography</u>
<u>LT</u>	<u>Lyttleton Times</u>
<u>NC</u>	<u>The Colonist (Nelson)</u>
<u>NE</u>	<u>Nelson Examiner</u>
<u>OC</u>	<u>Otago Colonist</u>
<u>OW</u>	<u>Otago Witness</u>
<u>PD</u>	<u>New Zealand Parliamentary Debates</u>

PART I

THE SOUTH ISLAND SETTING

CHAPTER I

VICTORIANS AT THE ANTIPODES

"... the seeds of the race, the forerunners:
offshoots, outcasts, entrepreneurs, architects
of empire, romantic adventurers; and the
famished, the multitude of the poor"

--- A.R.D. Fairburn.

The attitude of the settler towards the Maori cannot be entirely explained in terms of economic and social rivalry or understood simply as irrational fear and dislike on the part of the immigrant towards the alien community he meets. In the South Island, the struggle for the land ended quickly and peacefully, blood being drawn only at Wairau; the struggle in the South Island was against the soil not for it. While race relations form an important part of the North Island story, the South Island Maori population was relatively insignificant and came little in contact with the Pakehas. The South Island story is one of Europeans, sheep and gold - the history of developing European societies. Yet southern bellicosity towards the Maori during the Maori wars has been attested to by contemporaries¹ and re-affirmed by recent historians.² Though there was some settler mobility between the two islands, the attitude of the settlers towards the Maori was not wholly a product of their colonial situation. More must be known about the settler, his motivations, the society he left, and the society he hoped to find in the New World.

1. For example: Henry Sewell, Journal, ii, p. 209, 1 November 1863; LT 26 May 1860; NC 2 October 1860.
2. W.P. Morrell, The Provincial System in New Zealand, (1964 edition), pp. 124-125; J. Rutherford, Sir George Grey, (1961), p. 451; K. Sinclair, Origins of the Maori Wars, (1961), pp. 10, 210-211.

Historians have tended to concentrate on the study of formal colonization - the study of the official mind and of colonial policy - or of the effects of western contacts on the Maori. The official mind, the theorists, and constitutional experiments have been studied rather than the settler, his origins and his mind. There is need for more social analysis and investigations into the origins of the emigrants who sail 12,000 miles to the antipodes. The mind of the emigrant should be explored in terms of his motivations and the ideas and prejudices he brought out with him. Something needs to be known of the settler's response to the colonial environment and of his reactions to the obvious disparity between his expectations and the harsh realities of colonial life.³ In this chapter a possible framework for this kind of study is suggested. Out of the complexity of factors influencing the settler's decision to emigrate and the multiplicity of experiences and ideas that go to make up the mind of the settler, my intention is to identify those elements which are most likely to contribute to our understanding of the settler's attitude towards the Maori.

* * * *

Among the early New Zealand settlers there were a few romantic adventurers such as Arnold and Cholmondoley, but most of them soon left, usually disillusioned.⁴ The adventurer and the idealist could leave, most

3. Two recent theses show some attempt to deal with these problems. See J.R. Phillips, A Social History of Auckland 1840-53, unpublished M.A. thesis, A.U., 1966, especially chapter 3; and B.J. Poff, William Fox, Early Colonial Years, 1842-1848, unpublished M.A. thesis, C.U., 1969, especially chapter 1. Some of the better provincial histories are also useful, see especially R.M. Allan, Nelson, (1965), Chapters 2-4; A.H. McIntock, The History of Otago, (1949), pp. 234-238. See also J. Miller, Early Victorian New Zealand, (1958), Chapter 4.
4. See D.G. Herron, "Alsatia or Utopia? New Zealand Society and Politics in the Eighteen Fifties", Landfall, 52, (December 1959), pp. 325-327.

of their less fortunate fellow emigrants had to stay. The majority of immigrants had come to New Zealand to escape the effects of industrialization which acted as much on the middle as on the lower classes. The bankrupt and the remittance man fled social disgrace, seeking in distance anonymity, safety, and the chance of a regenerate life. Some came to heal a broken heart among strangers.⁵ Younger sons sought in the colony the opportunity and wealth denied to them at home by primogeniture.⁶ Poor health drove others such as John Robert Godley and C.W. Richmond to search for the sun and cleaner air under southern skies.⁷ The labourer, fleeing famine and low wages at home, came in expectation of higher wages and an improved station in life.⁸ These were the hard facts of economic and social change, of reality, which lay behind the aspirations and dreams, the

Restlessness of mind, Castle building, Profitable and useful employment. The true fraternity of the future. Our future home. ... which gave an impulse to the colonization of New Zealand.⁹

The settlement of New Zealand was part of the vast outpouring of British peoples, goods and capital in the nineteenth century, an expansion

5. For example Thomas Arnold, see introduction by James Bertram to New Zealand Letters of Thomas Arnold the Younger, (ed. James Bertram, 1966), pp. xxix-xxxi.
6. J. Logan Campbell, Poenamo, (1953 edition), p. 1. See also Phillips, Social History of Auckland, pp. 52-53.
7. For Godley, see A History of Canterbury, Vol 1 (ed. J. Hight and C.R. Straubel, 1957), pp. 152-153. Richmond's reasons for emigrating are given in Richmond-Atkinson Papers, (ed. G.H. Scholefield, 1960), i, p.27.
8. A Clayden, England of the Pacific, (1879), made New Zealand out to be a labourer's paradise, the cost of living being the same as in England but with higher wages. Workmen in New Zealand were said to be able to own their own houses in a short time.
9. Miller, Early Victorian New Zealand, p. 35.

which has been described as the "spontaneous expression of an inherently dynamic society." ¹⁰ It was partly a response to the problems created by industrialization. New lands and new homes were thought to be safety valves for the discontents of those who were not benefiting sufficiently or rapidly enough from the progress taking place around them. Contrary to what some of its contemporary apologists would have us believe, Victorian expansion was not in answer to the needs of what we would nowadays call the underdeveloped regions of the world, nor was it to fulfill the designs of the Creator or to civilize savages. "The cry of distress is at home; to assuage the calamity we are naturally directed to colonization," admitted the Aborigines Protection Society in 1841, ¹¹ and five years later the Economist joined in with an admonition to its readers, "the duty of England is to its own subjects, not to the natives of Africa or the slaves of the Brazils." ¹² Emigration was to be a palliative for the social distress accompanying industrialism.

In the seventeenth century, religious misfits, "vexed and troubled Englishmen", left England to found the New England colonies. The colonizers of the nineteenth century may also be regarded as misfits; they could not find a satisfying place in the new social and economic order being created by the rise of an industrial society in England. Religious discontent had

10. R. Robinson and J. Gallagher, Africa and the Victorians, (1963), p. 3.

11. England and her Colonies, (1841), quoted by K. Sinclair, Aborigines Protection Society and New Zealand, unpublished M.A. thesis, A.U.C., 1946, p. 32.

12. Economist, 25 July 1846, quoted by W.L. Burn, The Age of Equipoise, (1964), p. 70.

driven out the Pilgrim Fathers; economic necessity and social discontent lay behind the action of the nineteenth century emigrant and colonizer. He too crossed the Atlantic or he sailed to found new colonies in Australasia. Underlying the desire of the emigrant for better opportunities and living conditions was the feeling that his human dignity and proper pride would suffer if he remained in England, where the worth of men was seen as being denigrated by the machine. The social discontent which pushed the emigrant out of England sprang from "the resentment of men convinced that there is something false and degrading in the arrangement and justice of their world."¹³

In studies on the problems of rapid social change there has recently been an emphasis on the psychological factors of personal adjustment to change and the search for a new identity.¹⁴ Economic development and social change does not benefit all. Indeed the increasing of the chances, the range and the speed of social mobility, and the creation of a competitive society produces anxiety as much as contentment. Those who do not benefit from the developments occurring around them are not only faced with economic distress, but have a psychological need to reassert their self-confidence and to prove their personal worthiness, a need usually met by revolutionary action or by attachment to a mass movement.

13. J.L. Hammond and Barbara Hammond, The Age of the Chartist, (1962 edition), p. 2. See also W.S. Shepperson, British Emigration to North America, (1957), pp. 4-11.
14. See in particular: S.N. Eisenstadt, Modernization: Protest and Change, (1966); E.E. Hagan, On the Theory of Social Change, (1962); E. Hoffer, The True Believer, (1951) and The Ordeal of Change, (1963); D. Lerner, The Passing of Traditional Society, (1962); L.W. Pye, Politics, Personality and Nation Building, (1962); M. Walzer, The Revolution of the Saints, (1966).

Nineteenth century England was a society undergoing rapid social and economic change. The transformation of the eighteenth century agricultural order into one able to cope with the demands of the nineteenth century industrial nation did not occur smoothly. Discontent and condemnation of the new economic system was created, and many thousands of people had their social moorings swept away from them by the momentous changes. Both Owenite Socialism and Chartism may be interpreted as means by which a person, finding himself thrust into an economic complex neither of his making nor to his liking, could respond to his feelings of social "unsettledness" and disorder.¹⁵ Robert Owen offered a vision of an equitable brotherly community in which mutual aid would replace aggression and competition.¹⁶ A motive force behind the Chartist movement was the desire to remodel the political system in an effort to gain control over the social changes taking place and increase feelings of personal worth.¹⁷ The Owenites and the Chartists were seeking to regain their identity by creating a utopia in England; the emigrant sought in the colonies, the distinction, place and status they felt were denied to them at home. Emigration might be regarded as a nineteenth century mass movement; the settlement of New Zealand was one of its outcomes.

Though no doubt there were a few individuals, lacking neither success nor security in England, who emigrated to New Zealand in a spirit of adventure or simply because they saw in New Zealand the opportunity to

15. E.P. Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class, (Pelican Edition, 1968), pp. 857-915; Hammond and Hammond, The Age of the Chartists, pp. 1-3, 263-276.

16. Thompson, op.cit., p. 884.

17. Thompson, op.cit., p. 913; Hammond and Hammond, op.cit., pp. 273-274.

improve their economic and social position,¹⁸ what encouraged if not forced, most to leave their homeland was economic necessity, the knowledge that they could not improve their position by remaining in England, and a psychological need to regain self-confidence, self-esteem, and their individual balance.

Thomas Arnold, writing of Domett's initial failure as a poet perceived that Domett

Mortified at this - too proud to complain - resolved
that "they shall hear of me" - he bought land in New
Zealand in 1842, and silently withdrew himself from
amongst his friends to the new land beyond the sea.¹⁹

Domett's own expectations might be shown by this passage from one of his poems published in 1839:

There lurks the raw material of Renown!
There Genius yet shall dare the perilous verge
Of passionate Thought - some Bacon there hurl down
Old prejudice, and urge
The tide of mind to channels new²⁰

Maria Richmond admitted that though she was thankful to be an English woman she preferred to live in New Zealand where her brothers "are influential men where there is ample scope for activity of mind and body, and the employment of their capital in safety"²¹ William Rolleston emigrated because he felt excluded from the only society he cared for, that of "Home and the University". Wanting to escape the trammels and conventions in England,

18. See Poff, William Fox, pp. 9-11.

19. Thomas Arnold, Passages in a Wandering Life, (1900), pp. 109-111. But cf. E.A. Horsman's introduction to The Diary of Alfred Domett, 1872-1885, (ed. E.A. Horsman, 1953), pp. 13-14.

20. Venice, a reflective poem, (1839), p. 27.

21. Jane Maria Richmond to Margaret Taylor, 21 June 1850, Richmond-Atkinson Papers, i, p. 61.

he saw in New Zealand the chance of building a new and better social order in which there would be "better heads and what I value more, better hearts than are to be met in any country district in the Mother Country." ²²

Rolleston, like many other Victorian young men, sought a country still unfettered by tradition and precedent, where a man would not be smothered by old world restrictions. ²³ The first Otago settlers, according to their historian, A.H. McIntock, "turned to emigration ... to gain for themselves and their families that social independence and pecuniary security which were denied to them in a world where the principles of free trade and laissez-faire were sacrosanct." ²⁴ The mass of lower class emigrants fled perplexed industrial conditions, work-houses and unemployment, and hoped even for some rise in their social status by coming to New Zealand - for it was expected that the lower rungs of society would be occupied by the Maoris. ²⁵

The anxiety and insecurity created by social and economic change provided the push from England; what provided the pull to New Zealand? There is little doubt that the main reason most emigrants came out was in hope of finding economic opportunities denied to them at home. But the great wave of emigrants leaving Britain sought their fortunes in the new

22. Rolleston to Duncan Mathias, n.d., Rolleston Papers.

23. W.D. Stewart, William Rolleston, (1940), pp. xi and 9

24. McIntock, History of Otago, p. 236.

25. M. Turnbull, The New Zealand Bubble, (1959), pp. 48-51. See also Phillips, Social History of Auckland, pp. 38-40; Miller, Early Victorian New Zealand, pp. 8-10

El Dorado across the Atlantic - in the United States and Canada.²⁶ Why and how was a small trickle of emigrants diverted to become the colonizers and settlers of New Zealand? Free passages and land grants, the myth of the wide open spaces, provided part of the bait. The newness and remoteness of New Zealand were in themselves attractions to emigrants fleeing from the competitive society developing in Britain. To be on the ground floor of a new colony offered assurances of success and security. To found a new society, helping to fashion it according to one's needs, is often easier than to find a satisfying place in a society already established. The idea of founding a new society and the myth of the decadence of England were combined by Edward Gibbon Wakefield to form an ideology for the colonization of New Zealand. For many emigrants the final pull to New Zealand was provided by the vision of Edward Gibbon Wakefield and the propaganda of the New Zealand Company.

Edward Gibbon Wakefield's vision of building a Jerusalem in "the new land beyond the sea" made emigration respectable for the middle classes, but

26. During the period 1840 to 1860 a total of 4,062,840 emigrants left Britain. Of these 2,630,441 (64.74%) went to the United States; 696,622 (17.15%) went to British North America; 649,776 (15.99%) went to Australia and New Zealand while 86,001 (2.12%) went to other countries. Between 1840 and 1848 the New Zealand Company brought out 9,859 emigrants from Britain to New Zealand. This was only 10.40% of the total number (94,746) of emigrants leaving Britain for Australia and New Zealand during the same period. See table giving number of "Emigrants sailing from the United Kingdom, 1815-60" in Shepperson, British Emigration to North America, pp. 257-259, and Statistics of New Zealand for the Crown Colony Period, p. 28.

it was the unscrupulous and often amoral high pressure sales technique employed by Wakefield and his agents that lured 15,000 people to New Zealand.²⁷ Wakefield based his theory upon the fact of social distress in Victorian society which made emigration inevitable. He sought to organize this emigration so that it would benefit both the mother country and the emigrant. By systematic colonization Wakefield hoped not merely to transport people but to transplant a society. "In his own words colonization resembled the transplanting of full-grown trees, not young plants, the removal of society, not of people."²⁸ Others, such as Wilmot Horton and Malthus, had concentrated on "the shovelling out of paupers" by which they hoped both to improve the lot of the pauper and to save Britain from the revolution they thought imminent.²⁹ Wakefield went further. To the compelling need for emigration provided by social distress he added a purpose; the founding of new and better societies. He went beyond a simple response to economic necessity and social distress. Emigration of the poor and the transportation of convicts were but parodies of colonization, the true model of which Wakefield considered to be the founding of the New England colonies in the seventeenth century.³⁰ Nineteenth century "pilgrims" were to make New Zealand into a

27. For accounts of New Zealand Company propaganda see: Miller, Early Victorian New Zealand, pp. 5-7; Turnbull, The New Zealand Bubble, pp. 37-53. Note that the numbers brought out by Wakefield and the New Zealand Company, while not insignificant, were by no means dominant in the population after the 1850's. See Sinclair, A History of New Zealand, (Penguin, 1959), pp. 96-97.

28. R.C. Mills, The Colonization of Australia, 1829-42, (1915), p. 120, quoting from Wakefield's New British Province of South Australia, (2nd Edition, 1835), pp. 5-6.

29. K.E. Knorr, British Colonial Theories, 1570-1850, (1963), pp. 269-294.

30. J.S. Marais, The Colonization of New Zealand, (1927), p. 4.

"Britain of the South", a transfigured English agricultural society populated by respected squires and contented labourers. Wakefield's Utopia was to be a recreation overseas of pre-industrial England; the England of 1740 not of 1840.

Wakefield had touched upon the spirit of the age. The spirit of which Sir George Grey spoke in the House of Representatives in 1890:

Honourable members will scarcely believe now the kind of fervour which existed in Great Britain in my youth to found a New World differing from the Old World....³¹

Robert Owen and the Chartists had both attempted to found the New World in England; Wakefield offered a kind of Utopia, but a spatial rather than a temporal one, across the oceans. Wakefield's ideas appealed to people made anxious and insecure by the development of a socio-economic system in which they felt degraded. Systematic colonization and the vision of a Brighter Britain in the South Seas provided the emigrants with a rationalization. Rejecting England's dark satanic mills, feeling they were escaping from an unjust situation, the emigrant, leaving his homeland in search of a better life and more security, was provided with the rationalization that they were in fact moving in the forefront of civilization by leaving England to create a regenerate society, to build a better social order, and to establish a transformed and purified England. Civilization was being destroyed in Britain, but a new civilization would arise in the Antipodes

31. PD, LXIX, p. 610, 6 September 1890. During debate on the Federation Convention.

to replace the old.³²

The nineteenth century observer, A.S. Thomson records:

The emigrants were apparently bewitched; and there was a feeling among them that they were moving with, and not away from, the civilized world; and from the wealth of some, the migration was not a flight from starvation to exile but a short road to abundance and affluence. 33

The colonists even considered it likely that New Zealand would rise to rival the greatness of Britain and to remain great when Britain had ceased to be so:

And if the same mysterious round of fate
Which humbled Rome make England desolate,
Perchance that younger empire yet may thrive,
And England's greatness in her child revive. 34

The emigrant, then, was offered the advantage both of economic gain and of taking part in the founding of a great new nation:

Come to the Isles - the Southern Isles!
Away - leave grinding desk and loom
Come, be a nation's honoured sires,
The subject of all future lyres - 35

32. For a discussion of these attitudes especially as they relate to N.Z. literature see E.H. McCormick, New Zealand Literature: A Survey, (1959), especially chapter 2, and "The Happy Colony", Landfall, Vol. 9, No. 4 (December 1955), pp. 300-334; C.B.K. Smithyman, "Reflections of Social Attitudes in 'Epic' Poetry of the Drawing-Room, in pre-1900 New Zealand", University of Auckland Historical Society Annual, 1967, pp. 28-41; W.S. Broughton, W. D'Arcy Cresswell, A.R.D. Fairburn, R.A.K. Mason, An Examination of Certain Aspects of their Lives and Works, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, A.U., 1968, pp. 431-448.
33. Thomson, The Story of New Zealand, (1859), ii, p. 14.
34. Mrs. R. Wilson, New Zealand and Other Poems, (1851), p. 17.
35. Southern Cross, 13 September 1851, quoted in Phillips, Social History of Auckland, p. 50.

Models for the antipodean society were brought out from England. But with these models came the determination to reshape them according to the ideals of a pre-industrial England. The colonists would readily agree with William Fox that they had emigrated

not to 'grub for money', but to convert the wilderness into farms and gardens, and spot it over with smiling villages and pleasant homesteads. 36

Thomas Cholmondoley, an early Canterbury colonist, thought

It is not too much to say, that New Zealand will become an exact copy of England. Churches, houses, roads, inns, hedges, trees will be almost entirely English 37

The Wakefieldian ideology provided the colonists with the means of rationalizing their action in emigrating as movement with civilization to rebuild English society in the South Seas. What of the mass of emigrants who came to New Zealand 'tween decks? Little is known of the minds of the emigrants, poor and illiterate, who travelled in the steerage. Nor is much known of their response to Wakefield's ideas. Only a few would have needed more than the push of economic necessity and social distress in order to make the decision to emigrate, most were lured to New Zealand by the offer of a free passage and the inducements of goods wages from guaranteed employment.³⁸ The uneducated labourers had to be given more tangible assurances of security rather than the ideal of helping to found a Brighter

36. W. Fox, The War in New Zealand, (1866), p. 15.

37. T. Cholmondoley, Ultima Thule, (1854), p. 32.

38. See Miller, Early Victorian New Zealand, pp. 121-122, for an extract from the petition of "The Working Men of Nelson to Captain Wakefield, 14 January, 1843." See also Marais, Colonisation of New Zealand, pp. 62-63.

Britain - they came in expectation of finding a Utopia rather than with the desire to build one. To the mass of emigrants, as to the colonists, New Zealand was to be a

Haven of hunger; landfall of hope;
goal of ambition, greed and despair. 39

The primary concern of Wakefield, the settlers at large, and of the colonists was with the creation of a European society. Their actions were not related to the welfare of the Maori people excepting where it furthered their interests and purposes. Wakefield regarded New Zealand as a whiteman's country. At the colonial end of his system he was concerned with the settler rather than with the Maori.⁴⁰ The settler and the colonist had come, not in response to a humanitarian concern for the well-being or civilization of the natives, but in an effort to raise their own standards of living and to achieve an increase in feelings of personal worth by improving their position in society. They were not at all reticent about this:

The Bishop of New Zealand said he had come here to civilize the Maoris; let him apply himself to that work, but the colonists came for a very different purpose. 41.

39. From A.R.D. Fairburn's poem Dominion.

40. Historians have generally regarded Wakefield's native policy as a hastily formulated attempt to conciliate humanitarian opinion and to gain support for his colonization scheme. See A.H. McLintock, Crown Colony Government in New Zealand, (1958), pp. 33-35; Miller, Early Victorian New Zealand, pp. 8-12 Sinclair, History of New Zealand, p. 62. Wakefield's and the New Zealand Company's native policy would bear further and more sympathetic investigation.

41. Southern Cross, 10 January 1862, quoted by Sinclair, Origins of the Maori Wars, p. 26.

David Garrick, a passenger on the John Wickliffe, to the church settlement of Otago, frankly admitted

We have all come here either for the purpose of aggrandizing ourselves and families, or for the benefit of our health. 42

Indeed they were ill-fitted to be humanitarians. The foregoing discussion of the emigrants' reasons, motivations and rationalizations suggests that they were in fact nineteenth century Prosperos and Robinson Crusoes.

The French psychologist, O. Mannoni, in his Psychologie de la Colonisation (1950), published in English as Prospero and Caliban, (second English edition 1964), suggests a possible analysis of the colonial personality.⁴³ According to Mannoni the colonial is not looking only for profits but is seeking psychological satisfactions which are dangerous in colonial situation involving race relations.⁴⁴ A person becomes a colonial because he sees in the colony the chance to manifest his latent possibilities. The colony becomes part of an unreal world wherein the colonist believes he can marshall the facts of life to his own perpetual convenience. In European civilization it is the sense of inferiority that drives a man upwards⁴⁵ and the colonies provide an escape for those unable to cope with competitive European society

42. Quoted by McLintock, History of Otago, p. 236.

43. O. Mannoni, Prospero and Caliban, Part 2. See also Philip Mason, Prospero's Magic, (1962). But cf. B. Mazlish, "Group Psychology and the Problems of Contemporary History", Journal of Contemporary History, v. 3 No. 2 (April 1968), pp. 163-177.

44. Mannoni, op.cit., pp. 32-33.

45. ibid., p. 128.

and wish to reject it.⁴⁶ In the colonial situation where he will be surrounded by native dependents the colonist will gain the needed reassurances of his superior status.⁴⁷ "To the spirit convinced of its own inferiority, the homage of a dependent is balm and honey and to surround oneself with dependents is perhaps the easiest way of appeasing an ego eager for reassurance."⁴⁸ Thus a person has a "settler mentality" long before he becomes a settler. Shakespeare's Prospero and Defoe's Crusoe are to Mannoni archetypes of the colonial.⁴⁹

It is possible, then, to regard emigrants as nineteenth century examples of Prosperos and Robinson Crusoes bringing with them the "Prospero complex" - proud paternalism, neurotic impatience and desire to dominate. Such a mentality easily compensates for its personal inferiority with cultural arrogance and assertions of racial superiority.⁵⁰ Paradoxically the settlers and colonists, especially the better educated and more wealthy in the Company settlements, brought with them to New Zealand the prejudices and attitudes towards other races, and the ideologies, the Victorian Weltanschauung, of the dynamic and expansive society they were rejecting.⁵¹

* * * *

46. ibid., p. 108.

47. ibid., pp. 110-121.

48. Philip Mason, Forward to Mannoni, Prospero and Caliban, p. 11.

49. ibid., pp. 98-109

50. ibid., pp. 110, 120-121.

51. The following discussion is intended simply to sketch some of the influences the aggressive and expansive nature of Victorian society had on the colonist's attitude towards the native race he met. For a more general and detailed account of the settlers' attitudes towards the Maori see Sinclair, Origins of the Maori Wars, pp. 1-11, 19-26.

Britain in the nineteenth century had become the world's workshop, shipbuilder, carrier, banker and clearing house. Prosperity had led to optimism, a sense of national unity and self-assurance, and a spirit of progress.⁵² The rapid expansion of the British economy and society inspired the Victorians to believe they had discovered the philosopher's stone of progress with which the condition of men everywhere could be improved. The Victorians, like many before and after them, projected their own image as a universal ideal. This belief that Britain had a divinely ordained mission, a moral obligation, to share the benefits of its experience and civilization with the rest of mankind,⁵³ provided a rationalization and an ideology for those driven to emigrate by economic and social discontent. In all this there was a sense of superiority and self-righteousness. Britain stood at the top of a ladder of progress, at the bottom of which were the aborigines.⁵⁴ The Victorians aspired to raise all the races of the world up the steps of progress which they had climbed. British laws and institutions were to be reproduced wherever "it pleases Providence to create openings for us" ⁵⁵

A change in the nature of humanitarian opinion encouraged the attitude of superiority and the belief that the British race was "the chosen instrument for mighty things".⁵⁶ The romantic, and essentially conservative humanitarianism represented by Edmund Burke, and the concept of imperial trusteeship,

52. A. Briggs, Victorian People, pp. 13-14; W.E. Houghton, The Victorian Frame of Mind, pp. 27-53.

53. See Knorr, British Colonial Theories, pp. 310-315. Government,

54. See J.S. Mill, On Liberty and Considerations on Representative (1946 edition), pp. 118 ff.

55. W.E. Gladstone, "Our Colonies", 12 November 1855, in P. Knaplund, Gladstone and Britain's Imperial Policy, (1927), p. 203.

56. Archibald Alison quoted by Knorr, British Colonial Theories, p. 315.

was being replaced by the more militant humanitarianism of the evangelicals and utilitarians.⁵⁷ Instead of the protection of the noble savage and the preservation of his civilization advocated by the romantics, who did not encourage colonization; the evangelicals supported a policy of assimilation and anglicization. The salvation of the native was to be achieved by "inducing them to embrace the language, customs, religion and social ties of the superior race."⁵⁸ The colonist was to offer the Maori the benefits of his civilization and to change him into a brown European.⁵⁹ The presence of the settlers in New Zealand was to benefit the Maoris,⁶⁰ and the colonist was sure that

the formation of a settlement ...
where Natives and Europeans would reside, side by
side, would tend materially to elevate the former
into a condition of complete civilization....⁶¹

However, the altruism of the British version of "la mission civilisatrice" should not be assumed too readily. In any case to most emigrants it was little more than a rationalization, a more presentable slogan than one which might more blatantly express the real motives and purposes of

57. For this change in attitude in relation to India see E. Stokes, The English Utilitarians and India, Chap. I; see also Knorr, British Colonial Theories, pp. 382-388.

58. E.G. Wakefield to C.O. Torlesse, 12 May 1837, Canterbury Papers, Letters from Wakefield, Vol.I.

59. Cf. T.B. Macaulay's Minute on Education, 2 February 1835, in which he explained that the first object of English education in India was to create "a class of people, Indian in colour and blood, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect." See Stokes, English Utilitarians and India, (1959), p. 46.

60. Mantell to Merivale, 12 August 1856, Mantell Mss, 143A.

61. PD, 1858-60, p. 2, Blakiston in the Legislative Council.

emigration. The South Island settler certainly could not claim he had come to civilize the Maori - if this was his motive he surely had settled in the wrong island. A policy of outright extermination would have offended the sensibilities of the better educated colonists as well as humanitarian sentiments, thus settlement was said to be of benefit to the Maoris.⁶² At best, the civilization of the Maoris was regarded as an expedient and judicious policy for settlements being established in the midst of the Maoris, as were the settlements in the North Island. By turning the Maoris into a brown skin European not only would the Maori be raised from barbarism but in so doing his opposition and potential danger to the small European settlements would be removed. Instead of being a foe in his savage state, the civilized Maori would not only be a friend but also a consumer of the material incidentals accompanying western civilization and which the settler-trader had to sell.⁶³

Further the cause of humanitarianism in Britain suffered a heavy blow with the Indian Mutiny of 1857. Macaulay records in his diary

The cruelties of the Sepoy natives have inflamed the Nation to a degree unprecedented within my memory. Peace Societies, Aborigines Protection Societies, and the societies for the reformation of criminals are silent. There is a terrible rage for revenge. 64

62. See M. Turnbull, The Colonization of New Zealand by the New Zealand Company, 1839-1843, unpublished B.Litt. thesis, Oxford University, 1950., pp. 246-249.

63. W. Howitt, Colonization and Christianity, (1838), p. 504, writes "Let anyone look at the immediate effect among the South Sea Islanders, the Hottentots, or the Caffres, of civilization creating a demand for our manufactures."

64. Quoted by D. Woodruff, "Expansion and Emigration", Early Victorian England, (ed. G.M. Young, 1951), ii, pp. 404-405.

The massacre at Cawnpore in 1857 powerfully affected the mind of the Victorian Englishman.⁶⁵ Not only did it affect the Englishman's view of India but it forced him to reconsider his attitudes towards coloured races in general and to colonization.⁶⁶ The possibility of civilizing native races except at the point of a sword was brought into doubt, and in India reforms were to be carried out in a spirit of racial conquest; a benighted people, it was now believed, had to be compelled toward the light.⁶⁷ Writing about the Indian mutiny Jane Maria Atkinson admitted

I fully believe Carlyle's dictum that it is the right of the foolish to be governed by the wise, and I am strengthened by the wonders done in India in the opinion that the British have only to be determined on doing a thing, in order to get it done. 68

Thomas Carlyle and his ideas were to have an important influence in the nineteenth century. Because he was not concerned with colonies or colonization as such, Carlyle propounded no colonial theory.⁶⁹ His importance lies in how his ideas of hero-worship and his identification of right with might were used to support attitudes of racial superiority of the Anglo-Saxons, and to justify governing native races with an iron rule which need not take native rights into account.⁷⁰ Carlyle's philosophy suited the aggressive nature of nineteenth century British expansion

65. Briggs, Victorian People, p. 19; W.L. Burn, The Age of Equipoise, pp. 84-85.

66. Woodruff, op.cit., p. 404.

67. See Stokes, English Utilitarians and India, pp. 268-269.

68. Jane Maria Atkinson to Emily E. Richmond, 12 May 1858, Richmond-Atkinson Papers, i, p. 396.

69. C.A. Bodelson, Studies in mid-Victorian Imperialism, (1924), pp. 22-32; Knorr, British Colonial Theories, pp. 400-404.

70. Knorr, op.cit., p. 404; see also Houghton, Victorian Frame of Mind, pp. 209-213.

the ruling spirit of which was described as

...absolute individuality. It is unwilling in its contacts with foreign nations to acknowledge any other system than its own, and labours to enforce on all who are under its control its own peculiar principles. ⁷¹

The ideas of Carlyle also recognized the elements of rowdyism and interest in violence which lay beneath the apparent placidity of Victorian society. ⁷²

The instinct for violence was satisfied at home by the reading of semi-pornographic "horror" tales, by witnessing public executions, or at election time when rowdyism reached its peak. ⁷³ The same instinct for violence could be diverted abroad by the Crimean adventure, the Indian mutiny, and by the distant struggle against the coloured people in the colonies.

Frederick Weld wrote

...say what you will, we English are one of the most bloodthirsty races in the world once our blood is up, look at the Ionian Islands, look at India.... ⁷⁴

Elements of rowdyism and violence were also present in New Zealand colonial society. Assault and drunkenness accounted for half of the convictions in New Zealand during 1858, many other cases would never have come before the courts. ⁷⁵ Newspapers published very detailed accounts of court proceedings and delighted in the gory details contained in the evidence of witnesses. There were often unnecessarily gruesome descriptions of bodies

71. E. Diffenbach, Travels in New Zealand, (1843), ii, p. 172.

72. Briggs, Victorian People, p. 19.

73. Burns, Age of Equipoise, pp. 83-85.

74. Weld to J.R. Godley, 18 July 1860, Canterbury Papers, Letters to Godley, vol. 3.

75. See N.Z. Statistics, 1858, p. 84.

found after suicide or murder.⁷⁶ Public executions came to an end in 1858 by an act passed by the General Assembly after some debate in the Legislative Council concerning the advisability of continuing to allow Maoris to witness executions.⁷⁷ Politics was the occasion for a good deal of violence, especially at election time.⁷⁸ Physical coercion was frequently used to rally support.⁷⁹ Revans, a prominent member of the first General Assembly, is said to have drawn a knife on one of his opponents at a public meeting, and William Moorhouse of Canterbury was involved in at least one brawl.⁸⁰ W.T.L. Travers, another member of the first Assembly, a lawyer and prominent in Nelson politics, often allowed "his Irish blood" as he called it, to get the better of him and landed in court.⁸¹ Indeed the first session of the 1854 Assembly itself ended in a brawl.⁸²

Thomas Carlyle had his disciples in New Zealand, the most obvious and blatant being Alfred Domett against whom the Canterbury Press warned its readers, describing Domett as

A Votary of Carlyle's hero-worship theory; a worshipper of Cromwell and other autocrats⁸³

- 76. See for example NC 9 August 1859 on the discovery of the body of Thomas Gibb in a well with his throat cut.
- 77. PD, 1856-58, p. 432. The Bill did not cause any debate in the House of Representatives, though Hugh Carleton remarked that "the colony ought to wait until the Mother-country had taken action in the matter, seeing that the colony had not such good 'headpieces' as the Mother-country." PD, 1856-58, p. 441.
- 78. D. Herron, The Structure and Course of New Zealand Politics, 1853-1858, unpublished PhD thesis, O.U., 1959, p. 43.
- 79. ibid., pp. 151, 153-154.
- 80. ibid., p. 43.
- 81. C.B. Brereton, Vanguard of the South, Nelson, New Zealand, pp. 101-103, 106; Saunders, History of New Zealand, i, 283, 311, 330-333.
- 82. PD, 1854, pp. 338-339; Saunders, op.cit., pp. 306-308.
- 83. Press, 12 August 1863.

Domett was to have an important part in moulding Nelson public opinion as editor of the Nelson Examiner and in 1862 and 1863 headed the colonial ministry with the policy of confiscation.

The attitudes of superiority and arrogance adopted by the British in the nineteenth century arose partly from their consciousness of Britain's power in the world and of the technological advances she had made. They were not the first nor will be the last people to make the mistake of elevating fortunate trends of history into natural law, unique racial characteristics, or the gift of God to an elect nation. The attitude of the British settler towards the native race he met is also understandable. Without the advantage of any knowledge supplied by anthropological or sociological studies he was faced with the impact of a totally different way of life, a people with different habits, customs and values, and who spoke a strange language.⁸⁴ Conscious of the material and technological superiority and the military power of his own people, unconscious of the deeper psychological satisfactions the native derived from his indigenous culture, the settler may be excused for assuming the superiority of his way of life. It is not surprising though unfortunate that the settlers

did not conceal their contempt for the brown-skinned men, who were once cannibals, claimed land without title-deeds, disfigured their faces for ornament, lived in dog-kennels, fed on putrid fish and fern-root, and spoke a language in which there were no written literature. 85

* * * *

84. Studies are usually concentrated on the impact of the European on native cultures and peoples. It would be interesting and important to investigate the effects of these contacts on the European, on whom the psychological impact of meeting a totally different culture would have been no less than that on the native.
85. A.S. Thomson, Story of New Zealand, ii, p. 43.

The motives and colonial mentality of the early New Zealand settlers together with the ideas and prejudices they brought with them to the Antipodes, gave little foundation to the humanitarian hope that the settlement of New Zealand would be for the benefit of the Maori. The settlers were ill equipped by their background and their knowledge to cope with the tensions and potential conflicts present in a colonial situation in which two races meet. Such situations demand sympathy and understanding from those involved - the possession of an ability to perform "the mental act of imagining ourselves in the situation of others." ⁸⁶ Few Europeans - humanitarian, missionary, or settlers - possessed this ability to imaginatively place themselves in the position of the Maoris, and see things through their eyes. This lack of sympathy, a limitation of the human understanding, is unfortunately too often revealed positively in national and racial antagonism and conflict.

There was indeed much in the New Zealand colonial situation that made conflict more likely and understanding between the races more difficult to achieve. Real economic distress, or the insecurity and anxiety accompanying the rapid social and economic changes taking place in Britain drove the emigrants out of their homeland where they felt their identity threatened. They came with a psychological need to reassert their superiority and regain a sense of personal worthiness, they sought an improvement of their own condition and a rise in their standard of living. In the New Zealand situation the way to achieve personal worth was through the making of money and the building of the ideal society - the settlers' preoccupation was with

86. Thomson, op.cit., i, p. 82.

profits and social progress. In the North Island the settler found his path to profits and progress barred by the Maoris, who were unwilling to part with their land, the very basis of the settlers' progress to their utopia of a pre-industrial English agricultural society. Though there was little direct conflict of interest and few contacts between Maoris and settlers in the South Island, while the colony was united under one central government the South Island settlers found their progress hindered by the native problems of the North. Thus a conflict of interests aggravated latent antagonisms.

Their colonial experiences did little to improve the sympathy and understanding of the settlers. In the South Island, as we shall see in the next chapter, there was much in the condition of the Southern Maori to convince the settler of his own superiority, of the inevitable extinction of the Maori, and that the cheapest and most desirable elevation of the Maori was "a speedy passage to a better world above."⁸⁷ Further it soon became apparent that the "Brighter Britain" was not to be easily built in the South Seas. Some found they had not come to Utopia after all, while others suffered a more gradual disenchantment. The reality of the colonial situation fell far short of the ideal.

87. OW, 5 November 1859.

This was particularly so in Nelson where there were too little farm land, too few capitalists, but too many labourers.⁸⁸ The anxiety for land led, in 1843, to precipitate action and to a brief but disastrous and humiliating conflict with the Maoris at Wairau. The would-be landowner and the unemployed labourer both sought compensation from the equally indigent New Zealand Company. When the Company eventually came to its end in 1850, the landowners and the land-less were left to straggle against each other for control of the insufficient land and meagre resources available. The conflict between land and labour was to be a feature of Nelson provincial politics for many years.⁸⁹

88. Allan, Nelson, pp. 183-192, 229-240, 353-399.

89. McIntosh, Marlborough, pp. 131-151, 193-206.

CHAPTER II

THE DECLINE OF THE SOUTH ISLAND MAORI.

"...defeat, disease and loss of their
land...."

---Lady Martin, 1884.

The South Island Maori presents the scholar with a good case-study of the assimilation of an insignificant minority by an invading people.¹ The pre-European history of the South Island Maori, and the story of their early western contacts with sealers, traders, whalers, and missionaries, lie outside the scope of this thesis. Local and provincial histories usually provide an account of the pre-European Maori and of early western contacts in the province.² A study has recently been written on the early work of Christian missionaries among the South Island Maoris.³ These early western contacts played a significant part in reducing the Maori population and thus preparing the way for the large scale colonization that was to take place.

1. R. Duff, Tribal Maori and the Great Society, unpublished MA thesis, C.U.C., 1935, and "South Island Maoris", The Maori People Today, (ed. I.L.G. Sutherland, 1940), p.378.
2. See in particular: R.M. Allan, Nelson, 1965, Chap.1; A History of Canterbury, Vol.1 (ed. J. Hight and C.R. Straubel, 1957), section 3; A.D. McIntosh, Marlborough, 1940, Chaps. 1-2, Appendix I; A.H. McLintock, The History of Otago, 1949, pp. 25-148; R. McNab, Murihiku, 1909, passim. See also J.H. Beattie, Our Southernmost Maoris, 1954; H.C. Evison, A History of the Canterbury Maoris with special reference to the land question, unpublished MA thesis O.U., 1952.
3. Margaret E. Major, Christian Missions in the South Island in the 1840's, unpublished MA thesis, C.U., 1964.

Roger Duff estimates that in 1820 the minimum South Island Maori population would have been eight to ten thousand.⁴ At the 1858 census the number had been reduced to 2,983, including 510 on the Chatham Islands.⁵ Contemporaries attributed the swift decline to the raids of Te Rauparaha and to the introduction of new habits and diseases by the Europeans.⁶ The Maori chief, Tuhawaiki, speaking at the sale of the "Otago Block", thought back to the days when the Ngaitahu were a large and powerful tribe and described its decline thus:

The wave which brought Rauparaha and his allies to the Strait, washed him over to the Southern Island. He went through us, fighting and burning and slaying. ... But we had a worse enemy than even Rauparaha, and that was the visit of the Pakeha with his drink and his disease. You think us very corrupted, but the very scum of Port Jackson shipped as whalers or landed as sealers on this coast. They brought us new plagues unknown to our fathers, till our people melted away. 7

Tuhawaiki further gave a description of the destruction wrought by an attack of measles;

but one year, when I was a youth, a ship came from Sydney, and she brought the measles among us. It was winter... . In a few months most of the inhabitants sickened and died. Whole families on this spot disappeared and left no one to represent them. 8

4. Duff, "South Island Maoris", op.cit., p.375.

5. N.Z. Statistics, 1858, p.10.

6. Shortland to the Chief Protector, 18 November 1844, A. Mackay, A Compendium of Official Documents relating to Native Affairs in the South Island, 1873, ii, p.125; Shortland was reporting the views of the settlers.

7. G. Clarke, Notes on Early Life in New Zealand, 1903, pp. 62-63.

8. ibid., p.63.

On the other hand, Edward Shortland argued that the decline in population had been exaggerated as a result of over estimation of the original Maori population. He pointed to the nomadic nature of the South Island Maori and suggested that the occasional concentration of Maoris around trading and whaling stations gave observers a false impression of the size of the native population.⁹ Shortland refers to Cook's observation on the Middle Island "that its population appeared trifling, and that a great part of it was destitute of inhabitants."¹⁰

Though the extent of the decline may be debated it is clear that the raids of Te Rauparaha and new diseases killed off a great number of the South Island Maoris. Early settlers noted the Maori's lack of immunity to diseases such as measles. In 1848-49 an epidemic of measles struck the Pigeon Bay Maoris. James Hay records that almost half of the Maoris were killed, and that the survivors were quiet and peacefully disposed; there was "a marked change in their demeanour, which, previous to the epidemic, was often boastful and threatening."¹¹ The mortality was greater in Otago.¹²

9. E. Shortland, The Southern Districts of New Zealand, 1851, pp.39-42, 74-78.

10. ibid., p.75.

11. J. Hay, Reminiscences of Earliest Canterbury, 1915, p.10.

12. See W. Wakefield to the Secretary of the Company, New Edinburgh, 31 August 1844, in T.M. Hocken, Contributions to the Early History of New Zealand (Settlement of Otago), 1898, Appendix D, p.270; F. Tuckett, Diary, 22 May 1844, in Hocken, op.cit., Appendix A, p.223; Hocken, op.cit., p.51; McIntock, History of Otago, pp.93-94.

Duff estimates that Te Rauparaha killed off half the Maori population in the South Island by 1831 and that this was followed by another forty per cent depopulation, brought about less suddenly but more insidiously before European settlement became effective, this second period of depopulation ending by 1860.¹³ The decimation and depredation of the South Island Maori by Te Rauparaha and epidemics relieved the settlers from fear of any native insurrection. The settlers rejoiced with James Hay that

Providence allayed all doubts in this connection by an epidemic of measles which so ravaged the various kaingas that their ranks were left thin, and the survivors cowed and only too willing to become law-abiding subjects. 14

Two sudden successive shocks of defeat and decimation left the South Island Maori paralysed. The fabric of his society was being torn by the impact of an alien culture which questioned the social, economic and religious values of traditional Maori society. The destruction was not solely physical but also social and psychological. The once flourishing Ngaitahu tribe, strong enough to defy the might of Te Rauparaha¹⁵ and to contemplate driving out the Pakeha,¹⁶ was laid low by disease and in broken/spirit. The settlers were not the only ones who considered the extinction of the Maori only a matter of time. Their traditional mode

13. Duff, "South Island Maoris", op.cit., p.375.

14. Hay, op.cit., p.49.

15. ibid., pp.44-46; McIntock, op.cit., pp.89-91.

16. Hay, op.cit., pp.23-26, gives an account of a plot by the Canterbury Maoris to massacre the early settlers and whalers following the news of the Wairau massacre in July 1843. The European residents at the Otago whaling stations were also held in contempt and often threatened. McIntock, op.cit., pp.91-92; McNab, Murihiku, pp.327-328, 405-406, 416-418.

of life breaking up and their culture debased, the Maoris themselves began to believe their end was near. William Wakefield on the completion of the purchase of the Otago block in 1844 reported that

... the Native chiefs, in parting with their unoccupied lands, gave as their chief motive for so doing, and as an inducement to us to take possession of them, the conviction they labour under, that in a few years they and their tribe will be no more. 17

Otago Maoris were the worse affected by their contacts with the European. George Clarke, noting their degeneration in numbers, in physique, and in morals, considered the Otago Maoris to be in "a more pitiable state than any of the tribes in the Northern Island".¹⁸ Twenty years later, in 1864, Clarke's brother was sent to report on the condition of the Otago Maoris. He found them "in a most unsatisfactory condition." Instead of enjoying the benefits that the presence of a large European population was supposed to bestow, they were "as a people... squalid, miserable and ignorant," and "the most inert and listless" he had ever met. Clarke saw no future for them. "It is a melancholy fact that the aboriginal race is fast disappearing from these Provinces."¹⁹

The Canterbury Maoris were slightly better off, though there were conflicting opinions as to their condition in the 'sixties. The Rev. J.W. Stack writing in 1870 noted "a great want of earnestness in character

17. W. Wakefield to the Secretary of the Company, New Edinburgh, 31 August 1844, in Hocken, Contributions, Appendix D, p.270.

18. Clarke, Early Life in New Zealand, p.61.

19. H.T. Clarke to Colonial Secretary, 29 September 1864, Mackay, Compendium, ii, p.89.

of the Maori, a deficiency only observable since the colonization of the country," and pointed to the attitude of isolationism adopted by the Maoris, who felt they would be unable to compete satisfactorily with the European in the "higher walks of civilized life" and were too proud to throw in their lot with the lowly.²⁰ Further Stack noted the poverty of the Maoris, claiming that none could command an income of £100 or even half that amount, and that even if they rented their fourteen acre farms²¹ they would realise only £14 each family.²² However, Walter Buller, the Resident Magistrate, in his reports on the condition of the Canterbury Maoris, gave a much brighter picture. Though of poorer physique than the Northern Maoris, the Maoris in Canterbury formed "a vigorous and healthy community,"²³ and were on the whole in a flourishing condition.²⁴ Buller wrote of the social advancement of the Maoris at Kaiapoi and estimated their reserves to be worth £67,000.²⁵ He noticed none of the listlessness and aimlessness that so struck Stack only a few years later, Buller remarked only on the discontent of the Maoris over the unsatisfactory tenure of the Native reserve at Kaiapoi, which they desired to be individualized.²⁶ The great need of the Canterbury Maoris was for "some better provision for the administration of our law among them."²⁷ What Stack in 1870 took to

20. Report prepared by J.W. Stack, in Mackay, Compendium, i, p.27.

21. The Kaiapoi Native Reserve was partitioned and individualized into mostly 14 acre lots in 1862. See Mackay, Compendium, ii, pp.95-104.

22. Stack, op.cit., p.27.

23. W.L. Buller to Native Secretary, 8 March 1860, Mackay, Compendium, ii, p.129.

24. Buller to Native Secretary, 19 September 1861, Mackay, op.cit., ii, p.130.

25. ibid.

26. Buller to Native Secretary, 27 December 1859, Mackay, op.cit., ii, p.129.

27. Buller to Native Secretary, 19 September 1861, Mackay, op.cit., ii, p.131.

be an example of Maori isolationism, namely the native runangas, Buller considered "absolutely the only means and mode of preserving themselves from anarchy which the Maoris of this Province possess."²⁸

Buller and Stack looked at the condition of the Maori from different angles. Buller emphasised the material changes taking place in Maori society and measured social advancement in terms of the Maori's rejection of cannibalism and the adoption of European style housing and clothing.²⁹ The Maori's desire for the individualization of their reserves he interpreted as an eagerness to adopt European economics as the road to improvement;³⁰ he overlooked the possibility that the Maori disliked the idea of reserves, which took little account of tribal rivalries and local circumstances but herded all together.³¹ Being trained in law he welcomed the attempt of the Maoris to govern and enforce law and order themselves, and regretted the government's inability to do so.³² Buller, like John Gorst, misinterpreted the Maori attempt at self-government as the result of government neglect. Looking more into the state of the Maori mind rather than at the veneer of European civilization being adopted, Stack emphasised the Maori's mood of reaction against colonization, which expressed itself in an attempt to withdraw from contacts with the European society and a want of interest in life. Unable to compete with the European or to understand his laws,

28. ibid., p.132.

29. Buller to Native Secretary, 8 March 1860, Mackay, Compendium, ii, p.128.

30. Buller to Native Secretary, 9 September 1861, Mackay, op.cit., ii, p.131.

31. J.G. Johnson to D. McLean, 7 June 1856, Mackay, op.cit., iii, p.10.

32. Buller, op.cit., p.132

the Maoris

...prefer to consider themselves a separate nation - allies rather than subjects of the Crown. ...They prefer to stand aside on neutral grounds, where they can meet us as equals - where they can govern themselves, and provide for their own wants in their own way, only having recourse occasionally to the white-man for assistance. ³³

The condition of the Canterbury Maoris was unsatisfactory in Stack's opinion, their advancement towards Europeanization was being hindered by an attitude of isolationism and by the Maori sense of hopelessness.

Changes had occurred in the life of the Canterbury Maori since the coming of the European.³⁴ Though they were to offer some resistance to the extinguishment of their title,³⁵ especially after they heard their lands were being resold at a much higher price than they were paid,³⁶ the Canterbury Maoris were the remnants of a broken society, their reserves to which they were now restricted easily became ghettos in the midst of an increasing European population. They could not compete in the new economic race brought by the newcomers. The Maoris realised their inferiority and felt deeply the humiliation of being considered of no importance or use in their own country.

33. Stack in Mackay, op.cit., i, pp.26-28.

34. See A History of Canterbury, i, pp.31-32, 103-112.

35. ibid., pp.103-112; Mackay, Compendium, i, pp.207-222, ii, pp.3-37.

36. J.W. Hamilton to W. Fox, 11 January 1850, Mackay, op.cit., ii, p.6.

About half of the total South Island Maori population was to be found in the Nelson province - the 1858 census giving the figure 1,120.³⁷ Of these 752 resided in what was to become the province of Marlborough, only 9 were in the town of Nelson and 24 in suburban Nelson.³⁸ Writing in 1849 William Fox drew attention to the steady progress especially in agriculture and commerce of the Maoris since the settlement of land claims in 1844, and he attributed this progress

entirely to their juxtaposition with European Colonists. ...The example and success of the Colonists have stimulated their industry, and led them to imitate their proceedings. It proves in a great degree the wisdom of the scheme devised by the Company for intermixing the two Races. ... 39

But Fox went on to point out that though the capabilities of the Maori for civilization might be as great as was attributed to them, the actual degree of civilization attained was not very great. Indeed there was

very little in their character or habits to entitle them to rank as civilised men - very much which can only be regarded as distinguishing marks of Savages. 40

Though it contained the largest population of Maoris in the South Island, Nelson had little to fear from them for they were greatly outnumbered by the Pakeha and divided amongst themselves into several tribes.⁴¹

37. N.Z. Statistics, 1858, p.10.

38. Statistics of the Province of Nelson, 1855, p.2. The figures given for 1858 were the same as for 1855.

39. W. Fox, Report on the Settlement of Nelson, p.22.

40. ibid., p.24.

41. NC 3 April 1860, letter from W. Jenkins. The Nelson and Marlborough Maoris were divided into the following tribes: Ngatirarua, Ngatiawa, Ngatitama, Ngatikoata, Rangitane and Ngaitahu. See James Mackay, Jnr., to Native Secretary, 3 October 1863, Mackay, Compendium, ii, 137-138.

In 1863 James Mackay found it was "far easier to prognosticate the ultimate degradation and extinction of the Maori, than to prescribe the proper course to be pursued to avert those evils." He found them confined to reserves, hemmed in by settlers, fearful of being massacred by the Europeans and with a general spirit of despondency growing up among them.⁴² The Maori was unable to cope with the new economy and way of life introduced by the European. Though many tried to purchase Crown Land, a right they were entitled to by Grey's provision, difficulties had been thrown in their way by the Provincial Council.⁴³ The multi-tribal nature of the Nelson Maori made the Native reserves system especially unsatisfactory and there was agitation for the individualization and granting of Crown titles of the reserves under occupation. The reserves of land set aside by the New Zealand Company to provide a source of revenue for native purposes created difficulties in the allocation of funds.⁴⁴

* * * *

The destruction and changes in the life of the South Island Maori were no different, in fact from the destruction and changes taking place among the North Island Maori. In the North Island, inter-tribal warfare, made more effective and more destructive by the introduction of the musket, was as lethal as Te Rauparaha's raids were in the south. The North Island Maori had no more immunity to disease and epidemics than his southern brother. Indeed a recent scholar concludes that the population of the

42. James Mackay, Jnr., to Native Secretary, 3 October 1863, Mackay, Compendium, ii, pp. 138-139.

43. The regulation made by Sir George Grey, "that any native residing in a district in which he had been one of the sellers of land to the Government, should be entitled to purchase land therein at ten shillings per acre," had been rendered void by subsequent Provincial Council enactments. See James Mackay, Jnr., op.cit., p.138.

44. James Mackay, Jnr., op.cit., pp. 139-140.

South Island as a whole was reduced in much the same proportion as that of the North Island.⁴⁵ Maori society in the North Island was in a state of disorganization and transformation - it too was shuddering under the impact of western civilization. The Maori initially welcomed the European and his ways: the Maoris were not coerced into trade, hoodwinked into self-destruction, or taught to make war more effectively; rather they adopted the new practices as more effective means of pursuing traditional Maori goals, to extend their competence in warfare, to increase their prestige and wealth. However, even as the Maoris were selecting and adopting western articles which seemed best to serve their Maori purposes, and were using the Europeans as means of trade, they were unwittingly helping to create the forces which were to apply pressures and create situations which they could no longer explain in terms of their own culture which and/could no longer be controlled by their traditional society. The North Island Maoris differed from the South Island Maoris in the manner in which these pressures and situations were faced, and in their ability or willingness to resist the most lethal weapon in the European arsenal - that of land purchase. By 1860 the Southern Maoris were in the position of dispossessed tribes - the position into which the Northern Maoris were thrust by confiscation, land courts and land sales in the period after the Maori wars.

The bulk of the Maori population had always been in the North Island, so that the depopulation by muskets and measles, while proportionately no

45. K.B. Cumberland, "A Land Despoiled: New Zealand about 1838", New Zealand Geographer, VI, i (April 1956), p.21.

worse in the South than in the North, left the South Island Maori fewer in number and more scattered. The South Island Maori was made more painfully aware that his people were disappearing and his traditional society breaking up. Weakened in numbers and in spirit he could not resist the European demand for his lands with the same strength and appearance of unity displayed by the northerner.

Studies need to be made into the manner in which the South Island Maoris were dispossessed of their lands and the effects this alienation of their lands had on the Maori.⁴⁶ An attempt could be made to apply in the South Island the methods developed by Dr. Sorrenson for the North Island Maori.⁴⁷ The land to the Maori did not only represent an economic commodity or just a means of subsistence; the land was clothed with emotional values and sentiments,⁴⁸ and ancestral associations. Tribal traditions gave every piece of land a significance, which the European survey line often did not take into account. The Kaiapoi Maoris refused to reoccupy or allow the Pakeha to settle on the scene of the defeat of their tribe, Kaiapohia, and asked that it be regarded as sacred.⁴⁹ At

46. Some attempt has recently been made by R.W. Chapman, The South Island Maoris and their Reserved Lands, 1860-1910, unpublished MA thesis, C.U., 1965.

47. M.P.K. Sorrenson, "Land Purchase Methods and their effect on Maori population, 1865-1901", Journal of the Polynesian Society, 65 (1956), pp. 183-199.

48. See R. Firth, Economics of the New Zealand Maori, (2nd Edition, 1957), Chap. XI.

49. Mantell to Private Secretary, 21 September 1848, Mackay, Compendium, i, p.214.

the sale of the Otago Block, Tuhawaiki, stretching his arms and pointing with his finger said

Look here, Karaka,⁵⁰ here, and there, and there and yonder; those are all : : burial places, not ancestral burial places, but those of this generation. Our parents, uncles, aunts, brothers, sisters, children, they lie thick around us. ...My people lie all around us, and now you can tell Wide-awake (Wakefield) why we cannot part with this portion of our land, and why we were angry with Tucket for cutting his lines about here. 51

Further, land acted as the social cohesive of the tribe and determined the social and political relationship within the tribal organization. To the settler the land represented money; to the Maori it was life itself and more.

Details of the purchase of the South Island will not be dealt with here.⁵² Some suggestions will be made as to the reasons for the relative docility of the South Island Maori in parting with his land and the effects this alienation of the land had on the Maori. It should be noted that the dispute at Wairau which ended in bloodshed was, on the Maori side, the assertion of a North Island chief, Te Rauparaha, of his rights of conquest. The South Island Maoris resident in the district were not involved.⁵³

The land purchases in the South Island made during the governorship of Sir George Grey were regarded by Herman Merivale as "Highly important, and a fit close to Sir G. Grey's most useful career as regards his transactions with the natives."⁵⁴ By 1853 most of the South Island had been

50. Maori name for George Clarke

51. Clarke, Early Life in New Zealand, pp. 62-63

52. See Chapman, op.cit.; A History of Canterbury, I, Chap. VII; J. Rutherford, Sir George Grey, 1961, pp. 165-176; Mackay, Compendium, *passim*.

53. W. Fox, Report on the Settlement of Nelson, p.24

54. See Rutherford, Sir George Grey, p.176.

purchased without much difficulty and before large numbers of Europeans began to occupy the land.

The psychological effects of defeat and depopulation had made the South Island Maori disheartened, with very little hope that a future lay ahead for his race. This attitude of dejection and hopelessness influenced the Maori to part with his land in return for a monetary payment, together with the protection of certain areas, "reserved for ourselves and our children."⁵⁵ Probably by surrendering their unoccupied lands, the Maoris, with little knowledge of the nature of large scale European colonization and not expecting the influx of settlers that was to occur, felt that they could maintain their identity as a distinct people. Like the North Island Maoris before they realized the nature of the European demand for the land and the uses to which the Pakeha could put the land, the South Island Maori sold for the benefits he thought he would obtain through the purchase money, the acquisition of a local European market, and a source of supply for future exchange of goods. Almost the whole of the Canterbury Block⁵⁶ and the Otago block were purchased before the influx of settlers began. This is an important factor, for the North Island opposition to land sales began when the Maoris saw they were in danger of being overwhelmed by, what must have seemed to them, an inexhaustible supply of settlers who demanded more and more land instead of providing a market for Maori goods. In the

55. Deed of Sale, Otago Block, in Hocken, Contributions, p.276.

56. Excluding Kaikoura purchased in March 1859 and the West Coast in May 1860, both completed by J. Mackay. See Mackay, Compendium, ii, pp. 33-41.

South Island, by the time the Maoris realized what colonization meant and why the European desired his land, it was too late.

An important factor in Walter Mantell's success in persuading the Maoris to agree to the extinguishing of their titles for small monetary return and insufficient reserves, were the promises he made of the provision of schools and hospitals, and for the general welfare of the Maoris.⁵⁷ The area covering what is now Canterbury and Otago, an area of twenty million acres, was purchased for little more than £5,000⁵⁸ and the whole of the South Island was purchased for £25,139 plus an estimated £1,800 worth of goods distributed by the New Zealand Company at the purchase of Nelson.⁵⁹ The manner in which Grey had intended to carry out the purchase was

by reserving to the Natives ample portions for their present and prospective wants; and, then, after the boundaries of these reserves have been marked, to purchase from the Natives their right to the whole of the remainder of their claims to land in the Middle Island.⁶⁰

Mantell felt that reserves averaging eleven acres for each individual "amply provided" for "the wants of the Natives".⁶¹ The promises made by Mantell were not kept.⁶² The reserves turned out to be inadequate and unsuitable for development by European agricultural methods. The Maoris, in territories being rapidly occupied by Europeans, were unable to support themselves by their former methods of food-gathering.

57. See Mackay, Compendium, ii, pp. 75-88.

58. Mackay, Compendium, i, p. 3.

59. ibid., p. 5.

60. Grey to Eyre, 8 April 1848, Mackay, Compendium, i, p.208.

61. Mantell to Colonial Secretary, 24 January 1850, Mackay, op.cit., p.228.

62. Mackay, op.cit., ii, pp. 75-88.

Land purchase, which was to prove so lethal in the detribalization of the North Island Maori and in accelerating their decline, proved to be just as lethal in the South Island. A study could be made on the effects of land purchases on the South Island Maori. It is here suggested that the demoralization of the South Island Maori, and the disintegration of his traditional tribal social system, were results of the extinction of his land titles. The great destroyer of the Maori was neither the raids of Te Rauparaha nor the diseases brought by the Europeans, but the dispossession of his land, which acted as a far more powerful solvent of the basis of Maori society, the tribe. The psychological state of the dispossessed South Island Maori was very vividly and understandingly described by the Rev. J.W. Stack in 1870 thus:

...the entire change in his position from being Lord of the soil to a tolerated occupier of a very small portion, appears to have bewildered and paralysed the faculties of the Maori. Look where he will, he is hemmed in by customs and laws that he does not clearly understand. He feels a stranger and a foreigner in his own land. He can no longer fish and shoot and hunt without permission. He cannot keep a living creature about him, ... lest it should involve him in the transgression of some known or unknown law. Everywhere law confronts him, and casts a shadow on his path. Yet he does not hate the law, or try to resist it. ... The fault, he confesses, rests with himself; yet, nevertheless, he seems powerless to remedy it. The future offers no hope. He cannot look forward to his children entering upon some honourable career now closed to him, for they precede him to the grave. 63

Unlike the North Island settlers the Southerners had no need to fear their local natives. Indeed on the outbreak of the Taranaki war the South Island Maoris hastened to present declarations of their loyalty to the Queen and of friendship towards the Europeans.

They were sufficiently aware that, situated as they are, they have nothing to gain and everything to lose by disturbing the friendly relations at present subsisting between them and their European neighbours. ⁶⁴

With no land to defend, and vastly outnumbered, the South Island Maoris neither had the inclination to join nor saw any advantage in joining, the hot-heads in the North Island, and they regarded the King Movement as "a child's play-thing." ⁶⁵

64. Buller to Native Secretary, 19 September 1861, Mackay, Compendium, ii, p.130.

65. NC 28 October 1859.

PART II

NELSON AND THE NATIVE REBELLION

CHAPTER III.

THE INITIAL RESPONSE - PUBLIC REACTION AND LOCAL POLITICS.

During the 'fifties the situation in Taranaki was complex and becoming critical.¹ Many of the preconditions, suggested by Alan Ward,² for racial conflict in Waikato in 1863 were in fact present in Taranaki in 1860. The "greed of land sharks and the genuine distress and fear of frontier families, the cultural snobbery of the educated settler elite and the brutish racial superiority of ignorant whites, the desire of the Governor and the magistrates to end the humiliation of not being able to rule in the outdistricts ...",³ were all as much present in the Taranaki situation of 1860 as they were in Waikato in 1863.

The New Zealand Company settlement at New Plymouth was not a great success, by 1854 a European population of 2,094 owned only 60,000 acres, far less land per person than in any other settlement, and a higher proportion of this land was being cultivated.⁴ Inter-tribal warfare in the two decades before European settlement had confused the Maori title, and destroyed the tribal cohesiveness of the Atiawa, thus making the task of land purchase particularly difficult in Taranaki. The New Plymouth

1. For the Taranaki situation see Sinclair, Origins, Chap. 8, upon which this introductory section is based.
2. A.D. Ward, "The Origins of the Anglo-Maori Wars, a Reconsideration", New Zealand Journal of History, October 1967, pp. 148-170.
3. Ward, op.cit., p. 170.
4. From statistics given in Sinclair, Origins, p. 277.

settlers had never been very secure, their arrival late in 1841 coincided with the return of the Atiawa recently freed by the Waikato, thus Maori and settler became competitors for the land from the beginnings of settlement. The land hungry settlers looked upon the fertile lands to the north of their confined settlement as the Promised Land and the Waitara as their River Jordan. On the Maori side, the return of Wiremu Kingi and his followers from Waikanae in 1848 strengthened the resistance to land sales and acted as a stimulus to Maori quarrels, the division among the Maoris over land selling merging with tribal disputes. The tribal feuds added to the anxiety and fear of frontier families and the tendency of the settlers to side with land-sellers contributed to the anarchy. War between Maoris and settlers could occur anytime, a fact well appreciated by the government and a prospect not too disagreeable to the settlers.⁵

It was in the hope of controlling the situation and thus preventing a racial war that the Government went to New Plymouth in March 1859 to explain to the Maoris a new government policy on tribal feuds. The Governor's meeting with the Maoris on 8 March 1859 ended with the Governor accepting Teira's offer of land on the Waitara and Wiremu Kingi marching off with all his people "without any salutation -." ⁶ In this way the first crucial steps were taken in the chain of actions and decisions which led directly to the wars in Taranaki.⁷

5. For Taranaki opinion see Sinclair, op.cit., pp. 128-129; for an example of South Island opinion see NE 11 June 1856.

6. Gore Browne quoted in Sinclair, Origins, p. 137.

7. For an analysis of the Waitara dispute see Sinclair, Origins, Part III.

After a year of so-called investigations into Teira's title, the decision was made by the Executive Council in January 1860 to proceed with the purchase and survey of the Waitara block; occupying the block by force if necessary. However the Governor, contemplating not a war but a "bloodless victory", did not expect armed resistance from Wiremu Kingi. A display of force in the form of military protection for the survey party would, Gore Browne hoped, be sufficient to convince the Maoris the government meant business and to induce Wiremu Kingi to back down. He thought he was putting an end "to many Maori difficulties by a vigorous and decisive act".⁸ But Maori resistance was not to be ended without an appeal to arms and on 17 March 1860 a young volunteer cavalryman named J. Sarten was to become the matangohi⁹ in the armed struggle between Maori and Pakeha which was to continue sporadically and with varying intensity for twelve years.

* * * *

To the majority of Taranaki settlers the outbreak of hostilities was neither a surprise nor a shock, many indeed had looked forward to the event for a long time. The Maoris would be given a good thrashing and at last the settlers would obtain the long coveted land. The only disappointment was the government's timing - the settlers' crops had not been harvested; could not the government be more considerate and delay the war for another month !!¹⁰

8. Gore Browne quoted in Sinclair, Origins, p. 186.

9. There was always keen rivalry amongst Maori warriors to capture "the first fish" (matangohi), that is the first casualty, A.W. Reed, An Illustrated Encyclopaedia of Maori Life, (1963), p. 199 and H. Williams, Dictionary of the Maori Language, (1967), p. 189.

10. J. Hursthouse to C.W. Richmond, 20 February 1860, Richmond-Atkinson Papers, i, p. 524.

The popular feeling in Auckland was for a fight,¹¹ and the tone of its press so inflammatory that the New Zealander, a newspaper noted for championing Maori rights,¹² called on the press to be more responsible and not to endanger relations between the races.¹³ In Wellington the Featherstonites had to disguise their opinions on the war,¹⁴ their provincial opponents using the agitation as a means to embarrass Featherston and his provincial executive.¹⁵ Fox was almost forced to resign his seat in Parliament by his constituents at Wanganui because he disagreed with their warlike views.¹⁶ Provincial Councils and settlers throughout the country held meetings to express their approval of the Governor's action in Taranaki.¹⁷

The popularity of the war among the North Island settlers is not surprising. Convinced of the superiority of Anglo-Saxons, yet faced with the reality of Maori power, the North Island settlers felt a state of insecurity, their fears being characteristic of a white population resident among a truculent and unsubdued coloured race. To the northern settler war represented a solution to both their land-hunger and their anxiety. The might of

11. Sewell, Journal, iv, p. 65, 21 May 1860.

12. G.H. Scholefield, Newspapers in New Zealand, p. 80.

13. See NC 13 April 1860.

14. Sewell, Journal, iv, p. 150, 25 January 1861.

15. See AJHR 1860, E-3 Appendix, for petitions from residents in the Hutt and Wellington approving of the Governor's action and regretting the opposition of the Wellington representatives in the Assembly. The petitions were sent to the Governor by Ludham, Hart, Borlesse, Bowler, Carlyon and Hunt; the first four being identified in DNZB as opponents of Featherston in the Provincial Council.

16. Fox to Godley, 13 July 1860, Canterbury Papers, Letters to Godley, vol. 3.

17. AJHR 1860, E-3, pp. 39-47.

British arms would not only convince the Maoris but reassure the settler of pakeha superiority, and at the same time provide a cheap way of obtaining fertile lands.

The South Island settlers had to face few of the problems that confronted their northern brothers. The small Maori population in the South Island was mostly confined to reserves. Whereas in the north the European settlements were like islands in an alien and hostile sea, in the south it was the Maoris who formed the islands, and more insignificant ones at that. The land question too had been largely settled, the South Island Maori having with little reluctance parted with their land. The problem in the south was not land purchase but rather land disposal. On the surface then, with the question of which society was to be dominant and the problem of land purchase both settled, there was little reason for the South Island settler to be antagonistic towards the Maori. Yet the news of the outbreak of war in Taranaki was as popular in the South Island as in the North: the South was unanimous in favour of the Governor's policy, the decision to take a firm stand against the Maoris in Taranaki being warmly applauded as being "both politic and just".¹⁸ And in one South Island settlement the war in Taranaki was for some time a source of excitement and often of alarm.

* * * *

The news of the outbreak of fighting at Taranaki reached Nelson on 21 March and plunged the community into a state of excitement and anxiety.¹⁹

18. LT 2 May and 26 May 1860

19. Stafford to Gore Browne, 7 April 1860, Stafford Mss 7; NE 21 April 1860; LT 2 May 1860.

Within two hours of the arrival of the news three hundred attended a meeting called together by "the perambulations of a bell-man".²⁰ Support of the Governor was expressed by the meeting, the Nelson steamer, Tasmanian Maid, put at the Governor's disposal and the Taranaki settlers offered refuge in Nelson. During the meeting the Superintendent, J.P. Robinson, reminded the settlers of the good feelings existing between the two races in Nelson and hoped that no indiscriminate censure would be passed on natives in general.²¹

The mind of the Nelson settler was uneasy. It was remembered that some Queen Charlotte Sounds Maoris had in fact gone up to Taranaki to assist Kingi in 1859²² and it was thought that the Nelson Maoris, having friends and relations in Taranaki, would seek reprisals on the Nelson settlers for the sake of utu.²³ There were suggestions that emissaries from the North Island had been visiting the Nelson Maoris.²⁴ The Nelson settler began to fear a native war on his own doorstep.

20. NE 24 March 1860; see also Domett to C.W. Richmond, 21 March 1860, Richmond-Atkinson Papers, i, p. 545.

21. An account of the meeting is given in NE 24 March 1860.

22. NE 22 October 1859; NC 28 October 1859.

23. Stafford to Gore Browne, 7 April 1860, Stafford Mss 7; NE 7 April 1860; but cf NC 3 April, 1860 letter from W. Jenkin, government interpreter in Nelson in which he points out that the Nelson Maoris were few in number, divided amongst themselves into several tribes, and did not sympathise with the war party in Taranaki.

24. NE 11 April 1860. Though the report was never substantiated it should not be lightly dismissed. There was a certain amount of movement by Maoris between the islands, the distance being relatively short. King Movement emissaries were reported in Canterbury and in Otago see W.L. Buller, "Report on the Canterbury Native Settlement" 27 December 1859 in Mackay, Compendium, ii, p. 128; and also OW 30 June 1860. In September 1863 five Waikato Maoris were caught trying to incite the Nelson and Marlborough Maoris against the settlers, see NC 8 September and 13 October 1863. It was also noted that the Maoris had a better communication system than the Europeans and often had news from the north before their Pakeha neighbours, see NC 12 June and 14 July 1863.

It is not surprising, given the state of the settler mind, that the local good feelings between the races was forgotten when it was learnt that the Maoris intended holding a meeting in Nelson to give their oath of allegiance to the Queen.²⁵ The settlers viewed with alarm the prospect of having a party of 150 to 200 Maoris in their midst. Public pressure was so great that the native meeting had to be called off, the Provincial Executive was told by the Examiner in no uncertain terms that they had no right to arrange such a meeting when there was insufficient means of ensuring the safety of the citizens.²⁶ For several more weeks excitement in Nelson was maintained at a high level by each arrival of news from the north, by public meetings, the arrival of Taranaki refugees, and by "rumour, with her hundred tongues."²⁷

The next mail brought rumours that Auckland was about to be attacked and that as a result a naval brigade had to be removed from Taranaki to defend the capital.²⁸ The rumours confirmed the fears of the Nelson settlers of their own vulnerability and of the inability of the inadequate military forces in the colony to deal with more than one outbreak at a time. Another public meeting was called, this time not to consider what assistance could be rendered to the supposedly threatened settlers in Auckland but to decide what steps should be taken to "impart a feeling of perfect security" to Nelson. The meeting resolved that "the proper time has arrived for calling out the Nelson Militia".²⁹ The same day Stafford was writing to Gore Browne

25. NC 3 April 1860.

26. NE 4 April and 7 April 1860.

27. LT 2 May 1860 (Nelson Correspondent).

28. On 7 April see NC 10 April 1860 and NE 14 April 1860.

29. NE 14 April 1860; the meeting was held the day the rumour was received on 7 April.

appealing for weapons and ammunition, and for the necessary authorizations for forming a militia.³⁰ Two days later, 9 April, another rumour gave a semblance of substance to the worst fears of the settlers. A Pelorous Sounds settler reported sighting a body of five hundred Maoris moving towards Nelson from the Kaikouras. Robinson proclaimed a state of emergency and ordered the organization and arming of the militia.³¹ Later even the Examiner admitted that the "mischievous report was injudiciously circulated".³²

Later in April the Nelson settlers were given a chance to vent some of their pent-up feelings. A rumour had been circulated in New Plymouth that Bishop Selwyn had gained influence over the Governor and that Gore Browne was considering the cessation of hostilities. These rumours were published in an "extra" to the Taranaki Herald on 21 April which arrived by steamer in Nelson on 23 April together with J.C. Richmond who had come to ask Stafford the truth of the rumour. Stafford who received a letter from Auckland by the same mail had no knowledge of it, yet, Maria Richmond wrote

All Nelson is in a ferment at the bare idea of a peace being patched up with the natives - the Taranakians themselves cannot be more indignant - there is to be a meeting ... to remonstrate ... against such a measure. This seems to me premature as there is nothing but rumour to rest upon....³³

Although the Taranaki Herald warned there was little substance in the rumour, and the Canterbury press regarded it as "too ridiculous to be swallowed even

30. Stafford to Gore Browne, 7 April 1860, Stafford Mss, 7.

31. NC 10 April 1860; see also LT 2 May 1860.

32. ME 11 April 1860.

33. Maria Richmond to Emily Richmond, [23] April 1860, Richmond-Atkinson Papers, i, 570.

by marines",³⁴ the Nelson settlers considered the rumour to be "pretty strongly founded"³⁵ and four hundred attended a meeting on 23 April to

show these would-be interferers with the excellent policy hitherto pursued by the Governor, that they were wrongly estimating the opinion of the settlers of New Zealand, if they thought that any such peace would be acceptable or accepted.

The meeting cheered anti-Maori and anti-missionary remarks and finally passed two resolutions approving the government's policy in Taranaki.³⁶

Neither Canterbury nor Otago experienced the public ferment and excitement over the news of the outbreak of fighting as occurred in Nelson. During 1860 both provinces were preoccupied with local controversies: Canterbury settlers attended meetings on Moorhouse's railway scheme and Otago was agitated by the Murihiku separation movement. Distance was another factor. News from Taranaki, several days old by the time it reached Nelson, was nearly two weeks old when it reached Dunedin. Remoteness from the scene of battle gave the southern settlers a greater sense of security, the fear that the Maoris were planning a diversion of the war to the South Island³⁷ would be more real in Nelson than in Dunedin. On the other hand, fear concerning the possible belligerent behaviour of the local Maoris was as real to the common settler in Dunedin as in Nelson. Rumours in Christchurch of their disaffection led to the Kaiapoi Maoris sending letters to newspapers expressing their loyalty,³⁸ and the Lyttleton Times cautioned its readers

34. CS 3 May 1860, also LT 2 May 1860.

35. Statement by J. Lewthwaite at meeting; see NE 25 April 1860.

36. NC 24 April 1860 and NE 25 April 1860.

37. For rumours of this in Nelson see LT 9 March 1861, report from the Times' Nelson correspondent.

38. LT 1 August and 8 August 1860; see also Wellington Independent 7 August 1860.

against provoking the Maoris by spreading baseless rumours.³⁹ Similarly, Otago newspapers stamped down on rumours concerning the belligerence of the local Maoris.⁴⁰ Only in Nelson were the settlers encouraged to believe in the credibility of such rumours.

However lack of excitement did not mean lack of concern or interest, nor did it indicate disapproval of the war. The South Island was almost unanimous in favour of the Governor's policy.⁴¹ The Canterbury Provincial Council sent an address assuring Gore Browne of its support and offered to accommodate refugees from Taranaki.⁴² A public meeting was held in Dunedin on 12 April to express their sympathy with Taranaki.⁴³ Later Canterbury and Otago both established public subscription funds for Taranaki relief.⁴⁴

That the war was popular among the settlers is undoubted, the Nelson settlers were not exceptional in this. Initially the war was popular throughout the colony. Nor were the Nelson settlers exceptional in their feelings of fear and insecurity. In 1860 the New Zealand settlements were

39. LT 1 August 1860.

40. OC 14 September 1860. Remark on Portobello natives by James Adams. See also OW 15 September and 20 October 1860.

41. LT 26 May 1860.

42. Journal and Proceedings, Canterbury Provincial Council, Sess. XII, 1860, p. 33; for the address see AJHR, 1860, E-3.

43. OC 13 April 1860.

44. Canterbury established a fund at a meeting on 25 July at which £300 was collected, LT 28 July 1860. LT 19 September 1860 reported that the Relief Fund stood at £1,700 and later Moorhouse stated in the General Assembly that Canterbury had contributed over £2,000, see PD 1860, p. 383. OC 18 September 1860 reported the establishment of a fund at a meeting held on 11 September and that the Provincial Council had already sent £1,000.

still very much frontier communities scattered around the coast and separated from each other by high mountains, turbulent rivers, dense bush, or uncertain natives. Isolation made the settlers keenly aware of their vulnerability although they were often reluctant to organize their own defence.⁴⁵ Lack of efficient communications increased their susceptibility to rumour and exaggerated their perceptions of danger. Where Nelson was exceptional was in the excessive response made in comparison with the response of other settlements. How is the anxiety and excitement, almost panic, in Nelson during March and April 1860 to be explained?

* * * *

Proximity to the trouble spot did provide a source of danger, the "war zone" was but a few hours sailing from Nelson. But both this and the imagined danger from local Maoris were exaggerated. There was never any indication that Wiremu Kingi even thought of attacking the South Island and those with knowledge and experience of the Nelson Maoris attested to their loyalty and their weakness.⁴⁶ The tribal connections of the Nelson Maoris with those in Taranaki were thought to constitute a danger but then the Maoris were equally apprehensive of the "tribal" connections between the Pakehas in Nelson and New Plymouth.⁴⁷ The closeness of Nelson to Taranaki, and the similarity in the founding of the two colonies as Company settlements, created ties of friendship and family among the settlers of the two settlements.

45. The vulnerability to external attack was often stressed by southern newspapers in 1859 and 1860 see NE 13 August 1859, CS 2 August 1860.

46. See for example NC 3 April 1860, letter from W. Jenkins; Mackay, Compendium, ii, 137-139, James Mackay junr, to Native Secretary, 3 October 1863.

47. NE 1 September 1860. South Island Maoris feared that the settlers would exact revenge for the Taranaki killings from the South Island Maoris.

Further, some Taranaki settlers, disillusioned by conditions in New Plymouth or apprehensive of the future, moved over to Nelson before the war bringing with them the antagonisms and prejudices formed out of frustration. Indeed John Lewthwaite, who played a prominent part in the Nelson public meetings of March and April,⁴⁸ had been prominent in Taranaki, representing Grey and Bell in the 1856-58 General Assembly.⁴⁹ Lewthwaite settled in Nelson early in 1860 and had reason to hold strong views on the Waitara question; he had been among the settlers ejected from Waitara in 1844 by Fitzroy.⁵⁰

The Wairau incident in 1843 came as a great shock and disaster to Nelson.⁵¹ In one blow the infant colony lost some of its promising leaders, and few settlers escaped being involved in the loss of a friend or relation. The effect of the so-called "massacre" on the settler's mind was no less shattering. The success of the Maoris compared with the almost cowardly action of the Pakeha survivors was both an affront and an humiliation to

48. Lewthwaite was a member of the committee to organize the reception of the Taranaki refugees, see NE 24 March 1860. At the meeting on 23 April caused by the rumour of the cessation of hostilities Lewthwaite moved a strong motion condemning Bishop Selwyn for his interference, see NE 25 April 1860.

49. DNZB, i, 496. There is no record of Lewthwaite taking part in any debates in the Assembly, PD 1856-60. He resigned his seat on 22 March 1858, see N.Z. Parliamentary Record (1913), p. 93. On Lewthwaite's resignation C.W. Richmond commented "We are well rid of Lewthwaite. For Heaven's sake send us a man next time who knows which way he is going to vote." C.W. Richmond to I.N. Watt, 12 April 1858, Richmond-Atkinson Papers, i, p. 387.

50. DNZB, i, p. 496.

51. For an account of the Wairau incident and of its aftermath see R.M. Allan, Nelson, (1965), Chaps VIII and IX.

settlers who believed in the courage of their race and the superiority of British law and arms.⁵² Further, the killing of the prisoners by the Maoris horrified emigrants who had been led by Company propaganda to believe "that a total reformation had been effected in the character of the aboriginal inhabitants."⁵³ Wairau, by confirming the settler's ideas of Maori barbarity while undermining his sense of security and self-confidence, left a legacy of racial hatred and fear, and a desire for revenge. Colonel Wakefield declared "that the time was not far distant when the rising generation of Anglo-Saxons would take ample vengeance for the opposition their fathers had encountered."⁵⁴ Another settler said, after the tragedy, that he hoped to live till the day when a Maori might be shot like a dog.⁵⁵ During the 'forties some opportunities to expiate the humiliation of Wairau were found in forming a volunteer force in Nelson and in the "successful" expedition against Paramata in 1845.⁵⁶

The desire to revenge the humiliations of the 1840's may, as we shall see in the next chapter, help to explain the asperity of the opinion expressed on the Taranaki war. Vindictiveness may explain settler attitudes and opinions; behind the vindictiveness lay not only humiliation but also fear and insecurity, the ingredients of anxiety and panic. The experiences of

52. See for instance A.S. Thomson, The Story of New Zealand, (1859), i, 4 where he notes that in 1842 the feeling was universal "that one Englishman was a match for several 'black fellows,' the term frequently applied to the natives..."

53. NE 8 July 1843.

54. Thomson, The Story of New Zealand, ii, p. 79.

55. E. Home to Shortland, 15 October 1843, Hocken Mss, 52.

56. For an account of this incident see B.J. Poff, William Fox - the Early Colonial Years, unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Canterbury, 1969, Chap 4.

the 1840's contributed to this fear and insecurity. The failure of their appeal to arms at Wairau, the increasing assertiveness and bellicosity of the Maoris during the 1840's,⁵⁷ revealed the weakness and precariousness of their position to the Nelson settlers. Living in fear of a general uprising of the natives,⁵⁸ the unwillingness or inability of the colonial government to provide military protection⁵⁹ infuriated the Nelson settlers⁶⁰ - for it emphasized their defencelessness and helplessness against attack.

Nelson settlers were often reminded of the Wairau "massacre" during the 1850's. News of the Indian mutiny atrocities led to parallels being drawn between the Indian mutiny and the Wairau massacre.⁶¹ In 1859 complaining of the lack of militia to defend Nelson from attack in case of a European war involving England, the Nelson Colonist urging the necessity of a volunteer corp pointed out

The Wairau Massacre is too sorrowfully an instance of sending a party unused to arms to a scene where action was necessary. ⁶²

Proximity to Waitara, the presence of disgruntled expatriates from Taranaki, remembrance of Wairau, the experiences of the 'forties and the pattern of panic established by these experiences are all part of the matrix of influences on the behaviour of the Nelson settlers in 1860.

57. For accounts of the re-assertion of the Maoris in the 1840's see Ian Wards, The Shadow of the Land, (1968), especially Chaps 4-10; J. Millar, Early Victorian New Zealand, (1958), Chap 6.

58. For reaction of Nelson settlers to the racial conflict during the 1840's see Wards, pp. 84-90, 356-357; Allan, pp. 271-275, 280-295; Poff, pp. 54-74. See also NE 1 June 1844, 28 December 1844, 29 March 1845, 5 April 1845, 22 May 1847, 29 January 1848.

59. See Wards, *passim*.

60. NE 1 June and 28 December 1844; Allan, Chap IX.

61. NE 27 February, 3 March, 1 May 1858.

62. NC 29 July 1859.

It is understandable, then, that the response of the Nelson settlers to the news of the outbreak of war in Taranaki should be one of anxiety and fear. Indeed, initially, this was the response of most settlers in the colony. But in Nelson the anxiety and excitement was kept at a high level for several weeks by public meetings. How and why were three to four hundred settlers brought together so easily and quickly? Why in Nelson were settlers encouraged to believe in rumours other settlements rejected as being without the slightest foundation?

* * * *

What did the public meetings achieve? Nothing was learnt about the war itself. The meetings had not been called in order to inform, nor were they called together to discuss and question the war or the policy leading up to it, the justice of both being assumed.

In contrast to the generosity, if rather belated,⁶³ of the Canterbury and Otago settlers, no public subscription fund for Taranaki relief was established in Nelson.⁶⁴ Instead the meeting to discuss aid for Taranaki held on 21 March offered to accommodate the Taranaki refugees, assuming, without any information, that there would be refugees. Alongside an humanitarian concern for the safety of their fellow colonists in Taranaki the Nelson settlers had less altruistic motives. The refugees would boost

63. The southern provinces were chided by Nelson for their supposed slowness in offering to help the Taranaki settlers see NE 30 May and 6 August 1860; and the LT 23 June 1860 did complain of the apathy of the population.

64. Probably the experience of the Indian Mutiny Relief Fund discouraged any suggestions of another public subscription fund in Nelson see NC 29 July 1859.

the depressed economy by providing the much needed labour as well as a source of revenue for Nelson shopkeepers and farmers,⁶⁵ Past experience made it obvious that even in times of emergency Nelson could not expect a military establishment from which it could obtain both protection and profit. But refugees while not affording protection would at least provide the profit, and Nelson pockets would be left untouched for the cost of accommodating and provisioning of the refugees was to be a charge to the general government of the whole colony.⁶⁶ The benefits enjoyed by Nelson from the presence of refugees at the expense of the rest of the colony were remarked upon by several members of the General Assembly which met later in the year.⁶⁷ Nelson did send £400 to Taranaki for relief, but it was out of the provincial treasury and even this was regarded as an advance which with all others

entailed by the War in which Imperial interests and the maintenance of Her Majesty's supremacy are involved will ultimately have to be adjusted accordingly. ⁶⁸

The meetings did draw attention to the unsatisfactory state of Nelson defences and thus provided an opportunity to attack the provincial administration. It is suggested that it is in their use in the arena of provincial politics that the public meetings are to be understood. The latent fear, racial antagonism, and excitability of the Nelson populace was played upon and their expression organized in public meetings in order to embarrass the provincial government.

* * * *

65. The economy had become depressed and labour short with the loss of Marlborough and the move of some settlers to the Collingwood gold fields, see NE 23 February 1859 and Southern Provinces Almanac 1860, pp. 33, 46 and 1861, pp. 84-86.

66. PD 1860, p. 383, statement by Stafford.

67. PD 1860, pp. 519-524; Fox p. 520; Fitzherbert p. 521; Williamson p. 521.

68. Stafford to Gore Browne, 7 April 1860, Stafford Mss 7.

The political conflict in Nelson was reflected in the opposing interests of the two Nelson newspapers. In early New Zealand newspapers tended to be the mouthpieces of political groups and interests. In Nelson the Colonist opposed the dominance of the runholders, whose views were represented by the Examiner.⁶⁹ The Examiner supported Stafford, who headed the colonial ministry. In 1856 Stafford resigned his Superintendency of Nelson to become Premier. In the ensuing elections John Robinson, a former Birmingham Liberal⁷⁰ and influential with the Nelson Labourers,⁷¹ was persuaded to stand by William Wilkie, a local radical,⁷² and a shareholder of the Colonist.⁷³ Robinson defeated Dr Monro, leader of the Old Original Land-Purchasers' Association and one of the largest Wairau pastoralists.⁷⁴ Monro represented Stafford's "party" interests in Nelson⁷⁵ and together with Charles Elliott, the founder and proprietor of the Examiner,⁷⁶ became leader of the opposition to Robinson in the Provincial Council.⁷⁷ It might be said that at the local level, in provincial politics, the Colonist supported the Provincial Executive headed by Robinson; the Examiner was not only the opposition to the Colonist but also the mouthpiece of Robinson's opponents on the Provincial Council.⁷⁸

69. Scholefield, Newspapers in New Zealand, pp. 156-159.

70. Alfred Saunders, History of New Zealand, (1896), p. 331; DNZB, ii, p. 248.

71. ibid. See also Allan, pp. 188, 277.

72. DNZB, ii, p. 508.

73. Scholefield, pp. 158-159. Saunders, i, p. 351 states that Wilkie founded the Colonist.

74. McIntosh, Marlborough, (1940), p. 195.

75. Saunders, i, pp. 328-330; McIntosh, pp. 195-197.

76. DNZB, i, pp. 229-230; Scholefield, pp. 156-157.

77. Saunders, i, p. 332.

78. Robinson was opposed by a majority of the Provincial Council and in 1859 Elliott attempted to get the Governor to dissolve the Council. However Domett noted that "The public are just as likely to return a Council & Supt. opposed to each other, again as before." Domett to C.W. Richmond, 9 June /1859/, Richmond-Atkinson Papers, i, p. 462. See also Domett to C.W. Richmond, 23 May /1859/, ibid., p. 459.

Both Elliott and Monro feature prominently in the March and April meetings.⁷⁹ Elliott used both the meetings and the Examiner to attack the Robinson administration.

The danger of a Maori attack on Nelson and the need for a militia were both exaggerated to emphasize the apathy of the Robinson administration which had neglected to provide for the proper defence of the settlement.⁸⁰ Because of Robinson and his executive's complacency the province was inadequately prepared to meet a crisis and yet they were willing to expose the population to danger by agreeing to a native meeting in the town.⁸¹ It was of no consequence that the Maoris were coming to demonstrate their loyalty, and that similar native meetings had been held in Wellington and Marlborough.⁸² In any case, the Examiner chided, the provincial authorities had exceeded their functions in attempting to arrange the native demonstration - native affairs was the concern of the General Government and not within the jurisdiction of the Provincial Executive.⁸³ In a scathing retort the Colonist poked fun at "the able, warlike, and courageous guidance of one of the editors in this city - who on this occasion as on many others tried to cause a panic..." and pointed out to its readers that in the abandoning of the native meeting "we all lost a good holiday."⁸⁴

79. Newspaper reports of the meetings record the presence of Elliott and Monro at all meetings. Elliott chaired the meeting on 7 April 1860 to discuss the rumoured attack on Auckland and which recommended the calling out of the Nelson militia. Both men spoke at all meetings. See NE 24 March, 14 April, 25 April, 1860.

80. NE 21 April 1860.

81. NE 4 April 1860.

82. NC 4 May 1860.

83. NE 7 April 1860. The government interpreter, William Jenkins, a frequent writer to the Colonist who was scornful of the panic in Nelson, received a special dose of the Examiner's venom; he was accused of "fancying himself as a Minister of Native Affairs."

84. NC 4 May 1860.

The very necessity of holding public meetings was pointed to as illustrating the incapacity of the provincial government, and the supposed large attendance at the meetings as evidence that Robinson had lost the confidence of the population. The inefficiency of Robinson's executive had led to the rule by public meetings with "all its attendant dangers."⁸⁵ Not that Elliott would hesitate to use the public meeting as a weapon against his provincial political enemy.

When news that Auckland was threatened with attack reached Nelson on 7 April a meeting was called at which it was resolved that "the proper time had arrived for calling out the Nelson Militia", not to send to Auckland but to defend Nelson.⁸⁶ The editor of the Examiner it seems was prepared to fabricate in order to excite in his newspaper. In the report of the meeting a week after it was held the impression is given that there was great excitement on the arrival of the Airedale in the evening with the report of the threat to Auckland. A great crowd waited to receive more information and at 9.30 had managed to force an impromptu meeting in the old Court House.⁸⁷ However the Airedale arrived in the afternoon, not the evening,⁸⁸ and the old Court House was the smallest of the three public buildings available for the meeting.⁸⁹ It is not

85. NE 21 April 1860.

86. NE 14 April 1860.

87. ibid.

88. NC 12 June 1860. Communicated to the Editor.

89. The meeting called on 21 March was held in the Freemasons' Hall and the meeting on 23 April to discuss the cessation of hostilities was held in the Odd Fellows' Hall, both halls holding considerably more than the old Court House. See NE 24 March, 25 April 1860. For criticism of the use of the Court House see NC 22 June 1860. Communicated to the Editor.

surprising then that a Nelson settler was very suspicious of the promoters of the meeting and of their motives. The militia, he claimed, had been called out by a jacked up "public" meeting because its promoters had hoped that the militia being a compulsory force would be unpopular and thus make the Superintendent unpopular.⁹⁰

In Nelson then the anxiety and fear of the popular mind was played upon by the provincial opposition to forward their political ends. The Taranaki war was used to serve political interests at the local level. Another example of this is provided by the unsuccessful attempt of the opponents of the Canterbury railway scheme of Moorhouse to postpone the scheme by arguing that "in face of the Rebellion amongst the Natives in the Northern Island" the customs revenue would be uncertain and therefore the necessary finance for the railway might not become available.⁹¹

The initial response of the Nelson settlers to the outbreak of war in Taranaki was one of fear and anxiety born out of the past experience of failure and humiliation. This popular mood of fear and anxiety was used by the opposition to discomfort the provincial government. Thus the events in Nelson at the beginning of the Anglo-Maori wars in 1860 are the expression of accumulated grievances of the past and the reflection of local conflicts of the present.

90. NC 12 June, 15 June, 22 June 1860, communicated to the Editor.
But see reply from John Hume, NC 26 June 1860.

91. Journals and Proceedings, Canterbury Provincial Council, Sess. XII, p. 37.

CHAPTER IV

A SHORT SHARP STRUGGLE.

Nineteenth century New Zealand newspapers were not only almost the sole vehicle conveying information and opinion to the local colonists and settlers, they were also intended to inform and mould opinion in England. Depending on the Imperial Government for defence and with native affairs an Imperial responsibility the colonial newspapers, with their monthly summaries for England, provided the colonists with a means of expressing their opinions in England and of making their feelings known to the decision makers in the Colonial Office and Westminster. The fact that the colonial newspapers were intended not only for colonial but also for 'Home' consumption should be kept in mind when reading their views on native policy and the Taranaki war.

Further, the partisan nature of the colonial newspapers must be remembered. The reflection of local political conflicts by the two Nelson newspapers has already been discussed in the previous chapter. In Canterbury Fitzgerald published the Press largely to oppose Moorhouse's tunnel scheme and Crosbie Ward's notion of separating the two islands, both policies being supported by the Lyttleton Times,¹ a newspaper Fitzgerald

1. Fitzgerald to Selfe, 5 June 1861, Selfe Letters, ii, p.27. See also Press, 25 May 1861 (first issue). The Lyttleton Times, 29 May 1861, warned its opponent that "a paper which is the mouthpiece of one party cannot prosper." Ward was a frequent contributor to the Lyttleton Times; see Scholefield, Newspapers in New Zealand, p.213. For the Lyttleton Times's support of Ward's separatism see LT 23 October 1861.

had helped found.² Indeed Fitzgerald reported he had been accused of using the Press to secure political office.³ A difference of opinion in 1856 between James Macandrew and the editor of the Otago Witness was primarily responsible for the establishment of the Otago Colonist.⁴ A similar situation existed for the North Island newspapers.⁵

The southern newspapers faced problems in commenting on native affairs. In Canterbury and Otago the public was more interested in local problems (rather) than northern ones, and thus the leader writers' time was absorbed by railway schemes in Canterbury and by the separation of Southland in Otago. In fact local concerns occupied the leader writers' time so much in Otago that, though the news of the outbreak of fighting in Taranaki was published on 30 March 1860,⁶ there was no editorial comment on the outbreak of war until early May.⁷ Another problem was the availability of information. The Lyttleton Times complained that it lacked a correspondent in New Plymouth and had, as did the Otago papers, to rely on information from northern newspapers, in particular from Nelson.⁸ Thus, preoccupied with local problems and lacking information, the southern newspapers were usually content simply to reprint comments on native affairs and the Taranaki war

2. Scholefield, op.cit., p.212.

3. Fitzgerald to Selfe, 29 July 1861, Selfe Letters, ii, p.28.

4. Scholefield, op.cit., p.170. See also A.H. McLintock, The History of Otago, pp. 366-367.

5. See Scholefield, op.cit., and G.M. Meiklejohn, Early Conflicts of Press and Government, (1953).

6. OC 30 March 1860 and OW 31 March 1860 published accounts of the commencement of hostilities from NC 23 March 1860. OC 16 March 1860 had published without comment reports of disturbances in Taranaki. OW 17 March 1860 gave an editorial on the disturbances hinting that they may lead to war and advocated confiscation as punishment for the rebels if war should break out.

7. OC 11 May 1860 and OW 12 May 1860. The Colonist's editorial complained about delays in the mail service.

8. LT 18 April 1860.

from the Nelson newspapers, and mainly those of the Examiner.⁹ In fact it may not be a very wild exaggeration to say that the Nelson Examiner moulded much of the opinion of the rest of the South Island.

Not that the Nelson papers had better means of obtaining information: they too relied on North Island newspapers, in particular the Taranaki Herald. Their advantage over their more southern contemporaries was priority of information rather than quantity or quality, they too complained of lack of information.¹⁰ Where the Nelson Examiner was exceptional, not only from the more southern newspapers but also from its opponent, the Nelson Colonist, was in its readiness to comment.

From the first news of disturbances in Taranaki received on 7 March 1860 the Nelson Examiner published reports or editorial comments almost every issue on the Taranaki dispute and on the justice of the government's actions. In contrast the Colonist was more concerned with provincial problems and warned its readers not to let the excitement of the Maori war distract attention from the less exciting warfare of a Provincial Council.¹¹ The Colonist contented itself even in editorials with factual reporting of the conflict in Taranaki¹² and it attacked the Examiner for the "sombre ravings upon the subject of the present native outbreak", perceiving that the Examiner's editor saw in the war "fresh fuel for his endless but harmless onslaught upon our somnambulist Executive, as he is funnily pleased to christen it...."¹³

9. All the news of the Taranaki disturbances were received by the southern newspapers through Nelson, see LT 14 and 28 March 1860 and OC 16 and 30 March 1860.

10. See for example NE 5 July 1860.

11. NC 27 March 1860.

As the editors of the Colonist saw clearly enough the Taranaki war was being used as a pawn in the game of provincial politics. In the previous chapter it was argued that the provincial conflict in Nelson partly explains the abnormal anxiety, excitement and panic displayed by Nelson settlers at the outbreak of war in Taranaki. Provincial politics also partly explains the differing positions adopted by the two Nelson papers on the native war question. In Nelson the Superintendent, J.P. Robinson, supported by the Colonist, was opposed by the majority of his Council, the opposition being headed by Dr Monro and supported by the Examiner. By keeping the excitement and interest in the Taranaki war alive with its editorials the Examiner attempted to divert attention from the proceedings and the obstructionist tactics of the opposition in the Provincial Council which was in session from 27 March to 4 May 1860. In fact the Examiner did not bother to comment on the Provincial Council till 2 May¹⁴ and claimed that little interest had been taken in the session because of the distraction of the Taranaki war.¹⁵ Further as was shown in the previous chapter the Examiner used the war issue to embarrass the Robinson executive, and, the Colonist claimed, almost blamed the Taranaki war on the election of Robinson as Superintendent.¹⁶ On the other hand the Colonist, while factually reporting the war and attacking the immoderate tone of the Examiner on the war issue, by placing provincial issues first was attempting to consolidate Robinson's position as Superintendent.

A further fact that needs to be taken into account in interpreting newspaper opinion in Nelson is the connection between the Examiner and the

14. NE 2 May 1860.

15. NE 9 May 1860.

16. NC 5 June 1860.

Stafford ministry. Stafford in fact could be termed the "titular" head of the opposition in the Nelson Provincial Council ¹⁷ and was thus supported by Examiner. As will be shown later this explains the position taken by the Examiner when disillusionment and doubts about the war set in after June. The Examiner tended to blame the military commanders for badly conducting the war and the Governor for his policies rather than to blame the Governor's advisers, the Stafford ministry. On the other hand, the Colonist was more moderate in its criticisms of the conduct of the war but attacked, especially after the opening of the General Assembly in August, the colonial ministry.

It would be tempting, given the run-holding interests behind the Examiner and the more radical, almost working-class, origins of the Colonist, to interpret their differing approaches to the Taranaki war in terms of differing economic interests and class attitudes, and to see in the influence of men such as Elliott, Domett and Monro, who had been so concerned with the Wairau incident in 1843, ¹⁸ a greater resentment of Maoris reflected in the opinion of the Examiner. However, in their attitudes towards the belligerent Maoris, and in their opinion of the conflict itself and of its justice, there was little difference between the Examiner and the Colonist, nor indeed were they very different from any other newspaper.

17. See McIntosh, Marlborough, pp. 195-197.

18. In fact the editor of the Examiner in 1843, G.R. Richardson, was killed at Wairau, see Scholefield, Newspapers in New Zealand, p.157.

Opinion, during 1860, on the native problem in Taranaki and on the Taranaki war may be conveniently divided into four phases. The first phase, from early February when the first news of trouble brewing in Taranaki was received till the news of the outbreak of fighting received late March, was characterized by the demand for decisive action against the Maoris and confidence that, given the decadence of the Maoris and the superiority of the British, a mere show of force would be sufficient to overawe the Maoris and a bloodless victory achieved. During the second phase, April and May, with hostilities in progress the discussion turned to the necessity of a decisive victory to demonstrate to the Maoris the helplessness of their resistance, and the war was rationalized as a means of civilizing the Maoris. The justification of the war was beginning to move away from the rights and wrongs of a land dispute to the quelling of a native rebellion. With the blunders at Waireka and the winter inactivity of the military it was becoming apparent that no quick victory was to be obtained. The third phase, from May to August, was one of disillusionment deepened by doubts cast on the justice of the government's actions in the Waitara dispute. However this mood of disillusionment was accompanied by the assertion that whatever the justice of the war it must be brought to a successful conclusion, and by the denial of any colonial responsibility for the war or the expenses associated with it. The fourth and final 1860-phase began with the opening of the 1860 session of the General Assembly in Auckland on 30 July. The whole question of the origins and responsibility for the war was re-opened, the policies of the Governor and of Stafford's ministry being subject to scrutiny. With the acrimonious debates in parliament and with the availability of documents,

opinion became more informed, though not necessarily with any more understanding, of the basic issues involved. In this chapter we shall be concerned with the first three phases, public opinion up to the meeting of the General Assembly in August 1860.

* * * *

When news was received that the Waitara purchase was to proceed under military protection if necessary and that martial law had been proclaimed in New Plymouth on 22 February, the two Nelson newspapers took the opportunity to release some of the resentment built up by past failures and humiliations, and no doubt shared by the majority of Nelson settlers. For too long, the Colonist argued, "the dominant race had not domineered, and justice has been sacrificed in many instances in favor [sic] of the native", in Taranaki there now appeared the chance to show the Maoris which was the superior race and to

impress upon the native population their utter subjection to the British Crown, and the absurdity of any attempt to assert independence of it, or to break the law with impunity, or to submit to it only when it suits them.... 19

The Examiner's editorials reveal very clearly this resentment of the humiliations suffered in the past. During the 'forties and 'fifties the Maoris had been "petted and treated as curiosities"²⁰ with patience and magnanimity.²¹ But with what results? Rebellion had become the cheap pleasure of every turbulent chief²² for the Maoris had mistaken the

19. NC 6 March 1860.

20. NE 31 May 1856.

21. NE 21 March 1860.

22. NE 7 March 1860.

European's forbearance and kindness as signs of timidity, fear and weakness.

They look upon us as a very industrious, but cowardly people; and having seen us tolerate so much, are persuaded that rather than face their grimaces and tomahawks we will take anything at their hands. 23

It was time the Maoris were humiliated by giving them a "sharp but necessary lesson ... by hemming them in so completely that they shall have no means of escape, no alternative between destruction and entire submission...." 24

The newspapers were reflecting the current public opinion in Nelson which regarded all natives as "treacherous scoundrels" who ought to be treated as "conquered slaves." 25

The newspapers made little attempt to disguise their racialism or their attitude of superiority. The Colonist regarded the Maoris as savages who were little above the level of wild beasts but more dangerous because the Maori possessed the cunning and intelligence the beasts lacked. 26 However the progress of the local Maoris, among whom could be classed some of "the real gentlemen of this province" who had "intelligence uncommon in its amount", 27 was contrasted with the "low level in which the vast majority still remain in the Northern Island." 28 The criterion the Colonist used was the extent to which the Maoris had "assimilated themselves to European habits and civilized manners...." 29 The Examiner did not share this

23. NE 21 March 1860.

24. NE 7 March 1860.

25. NC 3 April 1860, letter to the editor from W. Jenkin.

26. NC 6 March 1860.

27. NC 12 August 1859.

28. NC 6 March 1860.

29. NC 12 August 1860.

favourable view of the Nelson Maoris pointing out that there were many "whose habits of drunkenness alone are a very sufficient bar to any very intimate fraternization."³⁰ Later the Examiner was to blatantly proclaim that the white~~men~~, using this more racial and colour prejudiced term rather than Englishmen or British,

in every quarter of the globe have given proof of their superiority in intelligence, in courage, in physical strength, and in humanity, to every coloured race that has ever sought to bar them in their progress.³¹

The order of the supposed qualities of the Europeans, intelligence, courage, physical strength and humanity, is interesting. For it was argued that the Maori had to be shown that the Pakeha's possession of intelligence, humanity and justice did not make him weak, and further that the Maoris, lacking in the intellectual and moral faculties, highly regarded physical force.³²

The Maori had to be shown the physical superiority of the European,³³ after it was argued, showing the Maoris your power/you may then be as merciful as you like.³⁴

But it was this supposed courage and physical superiority of the British that had been brought so much into doubt by the conflicts of the 'forties and, given the weak state of colonial defence in 1860, there was still little cause for settler confidence.³⁵ There was, then, a need to reassure the settler, as much as to convince the Maori, of the superiority of the Pakeha through

30. NE 7 April 1860.

31. NE 11 April 1860.

32. NE 11 April 1860.

33. NE 21 March 1860.

34. NC 6 March 1860.

35. NC 6 April 1860 doubted whether it was possible to put down the Maoris by physical force. William Fox and Frederick Weld both complained to J.R. Godley about the insufficient military force in New Zealand for the successful conduct of a war: Fox to Godley, 5 May 1860; Weld to Godley, 18 July 1860, Canterbury Papers.

editorials which bristled with claims of superiority,³⁶ and more importantly through an actual demonstration of this superiority, an opportunity for which was presented at Waitara.

Not only would decisive action at Waitara reassure the settler while convincing the Maoris of the hopelessness of their resistance to colonization and the advance of European civilization,³⁷ but, by giving the Maoris a convincing proof of British power, the much needed land would be made available to the northern provinces and the government freed from native problems. At last the government would be able to devote itself to its real task, for alongside the native race

one of the most interesting problems in the world is being worked out: a body of British colonists is growing in numbers and wealth, ... and gradually swelling to the dimensions of a nation, shaping themselves into society, and framing laws for their own guidance and governance. ... let the movements and struggles of this young British offshoot in its political infancy receive all countenance and support. 38

The implication that New Zealand was to be a European society is clear.

The native problems of the North had for long enough distracted government attention from the growing pains of the South. A short sharp struggle in Taranaki was welcomed as a cheap and easy solution to the divided interests of the two islands - it would remove the North Island's native problems.

The land funds and other revenues would be safeguarded and the proposals for separating the islands being advocated by Henry Sewell and the Lyttleton

36. See for example NE 21 March 1860.

37. NE 23 March 1860; also LT 2 May 1860.

38. NE 17 March 1860.

Times would remain pipe dreams because such an extreme measure would be rendered unnecessary.³⁹ Nelson never favoured separation of the islands while it was in a position of power with Stafford at the head of the central government - in a separated South Island Otago and Canterbury would relegate Nelson to a secondary position. Further Nelson was not too concerned about safeguarding the land fund as her area of remaining available land was almost finished.⁴⁰

A further reason for the Nelson demand for a decisive act in Taranaki was the discovery of gold on the Buller River in November 1859. The land purchases from the Maoris had not been completed and the Examiner warned against any premature move on the part of individuals to stake claims in case interference from the natives is provoked for "even where the power of English law is supposed to be paramount we have lately heard of instances in which they have taken upon themselves to decide disputed questions by main force...." ⁴¹ The defeat of Wiremu Kingi at Waitara would be a warning to the Maoris around the Buller River not to interfere.

Thus as a chance to humiliate the Maoris, to reassure the settlers of European superiority and their security in the colony, to end the native problems and thus make the demands for separation irrelevant, and as a warning to local Maoris against land disputes, the Nelson newspapers advocated a hard

39. NE 3, 7, and 14 March 1860. Cf OW 24 March 1860 which argues that the possibility of a native war in Taranaki brings the South Island land fund in danger and thus it is necessary to consider Sewell's separation scheme.

40. NE 21 March 1860.

41. NE 4 January 1860.

line on the Waitara dispute. What was their opinion on the dispute itself?

* * * *

Further investigation into Wiremu Kingi's title to the disputed land was not considered necessary. Confidence being placed in the Government's investigations of the title and its conduct of the purchase, the South Island newspapers did not doubt that the land at Waitara had been fairly bought.⁴² There was little understanding, and even less sympathy, displayed by the newspapers and settlers, of the nature of Maori society, or of Maori customs and land tenure. Maori tribal society had been commonly described as "debasing socialistic communism"⁴³ or as a "slough of barbarism".⁴⁴ Indeed it was this communal nature of Maori society which would have to be destroyed before the Maori achieved any form of civilization and "good relations and union between the races" established.⁴⁵ Wiremu Kingi's conduct at the Governor's meeting in March 1859, when Teira offered the land for sale, was not understood.⁴⁶ His behaviour was regarded as of an insolent and rebellious bully rather than that of a haughty chief, Kingi's

42. The question of Kingi's title to the land was not thought to be of importance by the South Island newspapers. Their information on the dispute was mainly from official Government sources or the Taranaki Herald, both prejudiced in favour of the official line. See NE 7 March 1860; LT 10 March 1860; OW 17 March 1860.

43. Henry Sewell, Journal, iii, p.924, 27 July 1856.

44. C.W. Richmond quoted by Sinclair, Origins of the Maori Wars, p.198. There were many examples of such scathing descriptions of Maori society.

45. NE 16 May 1860 commenting on Weld's election speech. See also OC 4 January 1861, letter to the Editor from "A Friend of the Society" (Society for Elevating the Condition of the Maori), and LT 31 October 1860, letter from J.E. Fitzgerald.

46. See Sinclair, Origins, pp. 137, 195.

tribal position as the acknowledged paramount chief was not recognised;⁴⁷ the Colonist claimed that Kingi was a former slave,⁴⁸ and the Examiner pointed to a supposed discovery of "a blot in Wiremu Kingi's escutcheon" which would not enable Kingi to claim descent from one of the original canoes and thus place him below Teira.⁴⁹ Kingi's refusal to define his individual claims or to discuss his titles was regarded as his recognition of Teira's right to sell.⁵⁰ The position adopted by Kingi, being based on his rank in his tribe and on a communal concept of land ownership, was incomprehensible to colonists imbued with western concepts of law and individualism. The Auckland newspaper, the Southern Cross, perceptively regarded the native problem as a conflict between Maori law and customs and English concepts of law.⁵¹ The Maori wars in New Zealand were not the only wars in the nineteenth century which in part resulted from the refusal or inability of the British to recognize or understand the legal and diplomatic practices of another culture. For instance twenty years previously the so called opium wars in China were fought not so much over the issue of opium prohibition but because the British became impatient of Chinese law and diplomacy.⁵²

47. See Sinclair Origins, p.174.

48. NC 6 March 1860.

49. NE 2 June 1860.

50. NC 6 March 1860; NE 7 March and 25 April 1860.

51. Southern Cross, 6 March 1860 reprinted in LT 4 April 1860.

52. See Li Chien-lung, Political History of China, (1956), pp. 12-46. Both in New Zealand and in China the basic conflict between cultures was heightened by economic factors, in New Zealand the need for land, and in China the British desire to open the door to western trade with China. However the modern emphasis on the economic causes of wars has tended to push into the background the fact that many wars result from blunders caused by the human failing to appreciate another nation's or culture's point of view and way of life.

Wiremu Kingi, it was pointed out, had not denied the legality of the sale, but simply asserted the right to disallow it. The question was considered to be one not of ownership but of authority.⁵³ How was Kingi's opposition explained? Wiremu Kingi, it was argued, opposed the sale "out of consideration for the interests of his race, and in pursuance of a policy partially adopted by the natives in the North Island...."⁵⁴

The argument that Kingi was acting in the capacity of a land leaguer features prominently in South Island, and particularly Nelson, comments on the Waitara dispute. The first editorial comments of most of the South Island newspapers on the Taranaki question all used the explanation that Kingi was acting as the leader of a land league or combination of anti-land-sellers.⁵⁵ Few historians now believe in the existence of a Taranaki land league headed by Kingi⁵⁶ but the belief in the league by the settlers is understandable enough. The myth enabled them to explain Maori behaviour in the eighteen fifties.⁵⁷ In 1860 the myth of a Taranaki land league enabled the settlers, unable or unwilling to comprehend the intricacies of native land ownership, to explain the actions of Wiremu Kingi and to transmute a land dispute into a native rebellion which required firm action on the part

53. NC 6 March 1860; NE 7 March 1860; LT 10 March 1860.

54. LT 14 March 1860.

55. NC 6 March 1860; NE 7 March 1860; LT 14 March 1860; OW 17 March 1860. But cf. Sinclair, The Maori Land League, pp. 30-32, in which he asserts that the notion of a land league, in which Kingi was a leading member, did not become used as an explanation of Kingi's opposition until August 1860 when the Assembly met and the existence of the league became part of the government's apologia.

56. Sinclair, Maori Land League, and "Te Tikanga Pakeke the Maori Anti-Land-Selling Movement in Taranaki, 1849-59" in The Feel of Truth (ed. by Peter Munz, 1969.) pp. 79-92; B.J. Dalton, War and Politics in New Zealand, 61-92. But cf. Edward Hill, There was a Maori Land League in Taranaki, published by the Wellington Historical Association 1969.)

57. See further Sinclair in The Feel of Truth, pp. 90-91.

of the Governor.⁵⁸ Further, action against Kingi could be rationalized as defence of native rights as much as the assertion of British sovereignty. Already in March before hostilities had commenced the Examiner was using the myth of "aboriginal trade unionism" to argue that the problem had arisen because the land league "like the unions in England has forgotten they have control only over those who had given their assent to join" and were trying to "coerce non land-league members."⁵⁹ Wiremu Kingi was a "bully" and attempting to prevent "rightful owners from exercising their property rights."⁶⁰ Indeed the Maoris in Marlborough were told the Governor was fighting in Taranaki to safeguard the rights of the Maoris,⁶¹ at least the right to sell their land.

By claiming a right to disallow a land sale and by heading a land league, Wiremu Kingi was attempting to regain rights that had been ceded by the Maoris to the Queen with the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. In return for the securing of their territorial rights by the Treaty of Waitangi the Maori chiefs had ceded their sovereignty and rights of chieftainship to the Queen.⁶² The Land League[?] and the Maori King Movement were seen, not only as attempts to prevent the Maori race from dying out⁶³ but as Maori attempts to subvert the Treaty of Waitangi and to pursue their "feelings of savage

58. NC 6 March 1860; NE 14 March 1860.

59. NE 14 March 1860. But cf. Sinclair, Maori Land League, pp. 39-47 and Origins, pp. 214-215, who suggests that the idea of aboriginal trade unionism originated with the government defence of their actions during the debates in the General Assembly after August 1860.

60. NE 25 April 1860.

61. NC 18 May 1860. Report of Marlborough native meeting. Statement made to Maoris by Dr. Muller, the Resident Magistrate.

62. NE 7 March and also 25 April 1860.

63. NE 14 March 1860.

independence" and "chimerical ideas of national separation." ⁶⁴ Both "Land League and King Movement were attempting to maintain their authority over land. Kingi's opposition at Waitara had brought matters to a crisis. If Teira's right to sell was substantiated then not only would there always be individuals willing to sell but nothing more would be heard of land leagues or King Movements. ⁶⁵ Thus the mantle of rebellion was placed upon the Maoris in Taranaki, who in their opposition to land sales were breaking the Treaty of Waitangi and thus "have rendered some manifestation of force against them necessary." ⁶⁶

* * * *

Though their comments were belligerent and fiery the newspapers shared Gore Browne's hope for a bloodless victory if not his reluctance to go to war. ⁶⁷ There was a tendency to believe that the sight of a regiment of British soldiers would show the Maoris the worthlessness of their "gasconading" and thus allow the Waitara survey to proceed peacefully. ⁶⁸ The Examiner ⁶⁹ was unwilling to believe that conflict between native and settler was imminent. When hostilities had actually commenced and blood had been shed, this unwillingness to believe in the imminence of war was held up as a reflection of a superior national character rather than a reflection of overconfidence

64. NE 7 March 1860.

65. NC 6 March 1860; NE 7 March and 14 March 1860. See also LT 2 May 1860.

66. LT 14 March 1860.

67. See Sinclair, Origins, pp. 184-186, 191-192 for Gore Browne's hope that the Maoris would be awed into submission by a mere show of force.

68. NE 18 February 1860.

69. NE 3 March 1860.

in European superiority and of settler underestimation of the Maoris. ⁷⁰

Having been "rudely awakened" from their "dream of peace and fancied security" ⁷¹ the newspapers, and especially the Examiner, set about moulding the opinion of their readers. Some elation was felt at the chance to revenge past humiliations, the Maoris were to be dealt with at last, and the temporizing policy of petting and giving way to the Maoris was to be ended. This policy of moral suasion had led the British government to colonize New Zealand with insufficient military forces to assert her physical superiority and the early governors were left powerless. ⁷² The failures of the eighteen forties were recalled:

Affronts in former times have been submitted to, compromises entered into, and the great emblem of British authority, the national flag, violently displaced, without being restored to its ancient pre-eminence. ⁷³

Now at last, though war and fighting was always to be deplored, the present physical struggle would show the Maori which is the superior race and convince him "that neither the peaceful industry nor the learning of the white men has unnerved his courage or enfeebled his arm...." Indeed by teaching the Maori to submit to authority the war would not only benefit the settler by making his life and property secure, but the Maoris would be ready to be converted from savages to civilized men. ⁷⁴ The war was given a mission - the civilization of the Maori.

70. See NE 24 March 1860.

71. NE 21 April 1860.

72. NE 11 April 1860.

73. NE 26 May 1860.

74. NE 11 April 1860. See also LT 13 June 1860 and 20 March 1861.

That the Maoris were still in a savage state and in need of civilizing was held to be demonstrated by what the Examiner regarded as "the cowardly and brutal murder of unarmed men and boys".⁷⁵ The murders shattered the belief that the missionaries had succeeded in humanizing and civilizing the Maoris and that they were on "the whole and as a nation rather better Christians than ourselves". The Omata murders called back to mind the Wairau massacre and was proof of the large amount of "innate savagery" still existing in the natives.⁷⁶ In a taunting attack on the editor of the Examiner for his "sombre ravings" the Colonist reminded him that subsequent enquiries had shown that the Maoris were in the right at Wairau, but we should not assume the Colonist had an enlightened view of the Maori for it went on to assert "if you will fight with savages you must expect to be savagely dealt with if you fall into their clutches."⁷⁷

The justice of the war was not doubted. "We have right on our side" the Examiner proclaimed; Wiremu Kingi was defying the justice and authority of the British government and was denying the rights of private property.⁷⁸ The Governor had been forced into war by the actions of the natives.⁷⁹ The Otago Colonist commenting on the war for the first time in May asserted that the Governor had to choose between "at once teaching the Maories a lesson which they will never forget, or a constant liability to such disastrous

75. NE 21 April 1860. The reference is to the murders of two farmers, Shaw and Passmore, a New Plymouth businessman, Ford, and two boys, Pote and Parker, at Omata on 27 March. See J. Cowan, The New Zealand Wars, (1955), i, p.172.

76. NE 21 April 1860.

77. NC 1 May 1860.

78. NE 11 April 1860.

79. NE 28 March 1860. Stafford to Godley, 28 May 1860, Canterbury Papers. Weld to Godley, 18 July 1860, Canterbury Papers.

outbreaks as the present whenever circumstances appear to warrent a hope of success." ⁸⁰ As the government's conduct had not been questioned and the ideology evolved before the commencement of hostilities was still viable there was little need to discuss the rights and wrongs of the policy that led to war. But then Bishop Selwyn and Chief Justice Martin began to sow seeds of doubt with claims that the government had not sufficiently investigated the Waitara question before proceeding with the purchase and had not recognized Wiremu Kingi's rights as a paramount chief. ⁸¹

The Nelson settlers voiced their opinions at a public meeting held on 23 April. ⁸² The meeting strongly condemned the interference of the Bishop and Chief Justice and cheered when the chairman, Llewellyn Nash, affirmed "that the war should be prosecuted with English energy and determination, and that peace should not be made until the Maories had been entirely and effectually subdued." Loud cheers followed a statement that "but one national flag should fly in the colony, and that one the Union Jack." ⁸³ That the Nelson settlers supported a war to establish British supremacy is clear. No peace was to be made until the Maoris were entirely humiliated and subdued. The settlers cheered Dr Monro loudly when he demanded that no quarter be given to "bloodstained rebels who have murdered unarmed and harmless men and boys." The meeting finally carried the following resolution

80. OC 11 May 1860.

81. See AJHR 1860, E-2.

82. This meeting was reported in NE 25 April 1860.

83. ibid., statement made by Mr Rankin.

with acclamation:

That while desirous of living on friendly terms with the Maories, and rejoicing in every instance of their progress in civilization and material comfort, this meeting considers that it is no less due to them than to the British colonists, that proceedings on the part of any of them, subversive of all natural justice and moral law, and leading, as at Taranaki, to bloodshed and destruction of property, should be promptly and decidedly punished by the Government. 84

No inkling of justice or right was conceded to the Maoris whose actions were condemned by an appeal to "natural justice and moral law". The Examiner had certainly moulded public opinion successfully. The meeting made no attempt even to consider the grounds of Selwyn's and Martin's argument; their attitude, which was reflected in the Examiner's editorial, was simply that "having marched across the Rubicon with a decided step" there was only one policy to be adopted by the government - complete victory.⁸⁵ Later, the Examiner was to argue against those who doubted the justice of the Waitara purchase by reminding them that "a year elapsed between the beginning of that transaction and its forcible completion, during which time no voice was raised to question its fairness and legality". The Examiner went on to assert, probably with the Colonist in mind⁸⁶ that to raise doubts about the justice of the war once the final appeal to force had been made was merely intended to embarrass political opponents and would "weaken the moral influence of the Government."⁸⁷

84. ibid., the resolution was proposed by Charles Elliott, the editor of the Examiner.

85. NE 25 April 1860.

86. NC 22 May 1860 had suggested that a judicial enquiry be held to investigate native land tenure and the question of the Waitara title. See also NC 19 June 1860 which supports Bishop Selwyn.

87. NE 30 May 1860.

However the doubts persisted and were not alleviated by Weld's letter to electors at Wairau.⁸⁸ Regarded as a spokesman for the government Weld in his letter seemed to indicate the government was changing its ground from that of calling in the military to quell some disorderly natives interfering with the survey on some land fairly purchased, to declaring rights of chieftainship to be "quasi-sovereign" and the appeal to these rights as rebellion against the authority of the Crown.⁸⁹ The implication taken from Weld's letter was that the government was no longer merely settling a land dispute but suppressing a native rebellion. The Examiner held that Weld's letter would raise the whole question of native rights and open the possibility, already perceived by the Colonist, that there were some rights, such as the feudal authority of chiefs, that were not incompatible with the Queen's sovereignty.⁹⁰ If Wiremu Kingi was merely exercising his rights as a chief at the head of his tribe then these rights would not be any more inconsistent with the Queen's sovereignty than manorial rights common in England and thus the original case against Kingi would no longer hold.⁹¹ At this point the Examiner could only fall back on the argument that force having been appealed to and the Maoris having committed murders and looted the property of settlers there could be no retracing of steps without disastrous results.⁹²

88. See NE 9 May 1860.

89. NE 26 May and 30 May 1860.

90. NC 22 May 1860; NE 26 May and 30 May 1860.

91. NE 30 May 1860.

92. NE 30 May and 6 June 1860.

The dilemma was finally overcome by linking the Taranaki conflict with the Maori King Movement, so that the Waitara purchase, for both the government and the Maoris, became "the touchstone to show the feeling towards us in the native mind."⁹³ The Atiawa and Ngatiruanui had tendered their tribes' formal allegiance to the Maori King at a meeting of the Waikato on 10 April.⁹⁴ At the end of May at a large meeting of King natives, support was expressed for Wiremu Kingi and on 31 May the King flag was hoisted;⁹⁵ "they have hoisted the flag of the Maori Kingdom, they have raised the standard of native independence... every native knows the story of the flagstaff at Kororareka". A conspiracy, of which the first act was the Waitara dispute, had at last been revealed and hopes for an early peaceful termination were at an end.⁹⁶ Confirmation seemed to be given to the argument of a general native rebellion. It was not realized that the new vigour of the King Movement was a result of an upsurge of nationalist feeling on the part of the Maoris who saw in the Taranaki war confirmation of their worst fears of the intentions of the settlers.⁹⁷ The time had arrived for active military operations which would enable the settlers "to look through a short interval of confusion and bloodshed to a lengthened period of peace and general improvement."⁹⁸

93. NE 20 June 1860.

94. See Dalton, War and Politics, p. 110.

95. For an account of the meeting see Alfred Saunders, History of New Zealand, (1896), i, pp. 396-397; Dalton, op.cit., 110.

96. NE 20 June 1860. See also Weld to Godley, 18 July 1860, Canterbury Papers.

97. See Sinclair, Origins, p. 232; Dalton, War and Politics, 110-111. Also see Fox to Godley, 5 May 1860, Canterbury Papers, Fox asserted that the King Maoris would not support Wiremu Kingi unless they felt the King Movement threatened.

98. NE 20 June 1860.

The hope of a short, sharp struggle based on the superiority of British arms was still held, but the earlier optimism was beginning to fade.

The early optimism of the settlers that the Taranaki war would be a short, sharp struggle, was based on the belief in British superiority supposedly demonstrated by success in previous colonial wars.⁹⁹ At the outbreak of the war confidence was placed on the fact that Gore Browne had fought in the Afghan campaign against Afghan mountaineers who were "physically, among the finest races in the world... and altogether a much more dangerous foe than he has now to meet."¹⁰⁰ Disillusionment was almost inevitable. The settlers were in fact blind to the reality of the local situation, not fully appreciating the capability of the Maoris nor understanding the conditions of warfare in Taranaki.

The settlers knew little of the country and its native inhabitants outside their own areas of settlement. There was much in the condition of the southern Maori to confirm the South Island settlers' belief in the "decadence of the native race."¹⁰¹ Decimated and demoralised the South Island Maoris had offered little resistance to the invasion of the European and had without any struggle parted with their land.¹⁰² By 1860 the South Island Maoris were not only landless but had become an insignificant minority, outnumbered by the Pakeha twenty to one. The prognostications

99. For example see above p.73 quote from NE 11 April 1860.

100. NE 24 March 1860.

101. NE 24 March 1860. For the condition of the South Island Maori see above Chapter 2.

102. For the alienation of their land by the South Island Maori see R.W. Chapman, The South Island Maoris and their Reserved Lands, unpublished MA thesis, University of Canterbury, 1966.

of the decline and eventual extinction of the Maori were regarded as being confirmed by Fenton's report on the state of the Maoris.¹⁰³ Indeed, rather than being feared as a threat, the South Island Maoris feared the settlers and at the outbreak of fighting in 1860 hastened to proclaim their loyalty to the government and to assure the settlers of their friendship.¹⁰⁴ The progress of the war was to show that the state of the South Island Maori merely disguised the reality of brown power in the north.

The lack of an immediate and decisive military success began to erode the settlers' confidence in the superiority of the imperial troops. Shortly after the war began, the fiasco at Waireka called forth a strong feeling "varying between contempt, indignation and utter disbelief as to the behaviour attributed to some of the parties engaged there...."¹⁰⁵ It was difficult for the settlers to believe that the British soldier did not possess "steady, unflinching valour ... and real intelligence", and as the actual conditions in Taranaki were only dimly perceived, criticism was heaped upon the military commanders. More strangely, perhaps, was the criticism directed at the Maoris for not coming out to fight on open country so that the British soldier could display his true worth.¹⁰⁶ Harsh criticism was directed first at Lieutenant-

103. F.D. Fenton, Observations on the State of the Aboriginal Inhabitants of New Zealand, (1859). For newspaper comments on Fenton's report see NE 13 and 23 July 1859; LT 29 June 1859. The eventual extinction of the Maori, which was not expected to be long delayed, was often regarded as the solution to the native difficulty. CS 10 February 1859; OW 5 November 1859.

104. NC 30 March and 3 April 1860; NE 1 September 1860; LT 8 August and 15 September 1860; OC 19 October 1860; OW 20 October 1860.

105. NE 24 March 1860. For details of the battle see Cowan, New Zealand Wars, i, pp. 171-182.

106. See for example NE 18 April 1860. But cf. Sinclair, Origins, p.227 and Dalton, War and Politics, pp. 107-109.

Colonel Murray, the commander of the Imperial troops in Taranaki,¹⁰⁷ and later at Colonel Gold, the commander of military forces in New Zealand. Criticism of Gold became virulent and bitter after the British defeat at Puke-ta-kauere,¹⁰⁸ and the news of his replacement by General Pratt was welcomed.¹⁰⁹ Little of this criticism was just,¹¹⁰ some of it merely reflected the opinion of the Taranaki settlers and press,¹¹¹ much was the result of attempting to reconcile myth with actuality. The past was appealed to and rather unfair comparisons made: "under the Command of Sir Charles Napier, 1,500 British soldiers put to flight and utterly routed with great slaughter 20,000 Belooches, as brave as the Maories, with better arms and discipline."¹¹² The inactivity of British troops "burning to show what stuff they are made of ..." was explained by blaming bad leadership in time of battle for, referring to Gold, "the hand which forges and fashions the weapon is not always the best fitted to wield it"¹¹³

The winter inactivity of the military was beyond the understanding of men who were looking for "a quick and decided blow."¹¹⁴ The lack of action of the British troops in Taranaki would indeed encourage the Maori.

107. NE 14 April 1860.

108. See especially NE 7, 11 and 14 July 1860; LT 14 July 1860. For details of the encounter see Cowan, New Zealand Wars, i, pp. 183-190.

109. NE 8 August 1860.

110. See Sinclair, Origins, pp. 229-230 and Dalton, War and Politics, 107-112.

111. For Taranaki opinion see Richmond-Atkinson Papers, i, pp. 554-555, 568, 572, 574, 582-584, 606.

112. NE 14 July 1860.

113. NE 11 July 1860.

114. NE 23 May 1860.

but
 who 'does not yet know the strength of the white man, and is imperfectly acquainted with the nature of his weapons of war, their effects, or the mode of using them." The opportunity of administering a crushing blow at the start having been lost the war would certainly be longer but the outcome was never doubted. ¹¹⁵ Indeed the opportunity was lost almost from the beginning when Wiremu Kingi was allowed to escape from Te Kohia pah. ¹¹⁶ The consequences of the failure of British arms to administer a decisive blow was well appreciated. It was apparent that the struggle would neither be short nor sharp: "we anticipate many losses, many sacrifices, and a period more or less prolonged of warfare and interruption to our usual peaceful occupations." ¹¹⁷ Even more seriously the Examiner told its readers their "interests are affected by the existing state of things; still more must they be by the issue. Heavy demands will necessarily be made on our financial resources; supplementary taxation, or borrowing of money, perhaps required." ¹¹⁸ The war was beginning to become unpopular.

By May the early hopes for a short sharp struggle had already begun to fade. With doubts being raised about the justice of the war, with the winter inactivity of the troops followed by their defeat at Puke-ta-kauere, with questions being asked about how the war expenses were to be met, and with an economic depression which the Nelson settlers blamed on the war, ¹¹⁹

115. NE 23 May 1860.

116. NE 18 April and 16 May 1860.

117. NE 16 May 1860.

118. NE 23 May 1860.

119. LT 1 September 1860.

the disillusionment of the settlers was beginning to turn to despair.¹²⁰ Demands were made for information and explanation and as early as May it was suggested that the General Assembly be called together.¹²¹ At the beginning of August a new military commander arrived and the General Assembly met in Auckland. General Pratt's early statements and demands for a free hand in military matters dampened hopes for an improvement in the military situation.¹²² Nor did the General Assembly revive optimism. The revelations made during the parliamentary debates and in papers tabled in the House instead of removing doubts and relieving the disillusionment, sharpened the doubts and deepened the sense of despair.

120. Weld to Godley, 18 July 1860 and 24 August 1860; Fox to Godley, 4 September 1860; Canterbury Papers.

121. NE 12 and 23 May, 5 and 11 July 1860.

122. NE 11 August 1860.

CHAPTER V

POLITICS AND THE NATIVE REBELLION.

Behind the early enthusiasm for Gore Browne's hard line in Taranaki was the expectation that, being a departure from the vacillation and temporizing of the Government's native policy, it would provide a quick and easy solution to the chronic native and land purchase problems that afflicted the North Island. The South Islanders considered these problems to be holding up the progress of the colony as a whole, and to be a persistent threat to the hard earned revenues of the southern provinces. They feared being called upon to finance projects benefitting the northern provinces only. Some considered the threat so great that they suggested separation of the two islands as a palliative.¹ Under-rating the Maoris the settlers believed that decisive action on the part of the governor would solve their problems leaving their purses untouched and the colony united. At first a mere display of determination and military force was thought to be sufficient to induce Wiremu Kingi to back down at Waitara; if instead of backing down Kingi foolishly prepared to "show fight", then a "sharp but necessary lesson" administered quickly and decisively would arrest the progress of native disaffection.² However, the struggle was to prove to be neither short nor sharp. The quick, decisive and crushing blow, which

1. Proposed by Henry Sewell again in January 1860, see LT 18 January 1860. See also LT 1 February 1860; OW 24 March 1860. Separation was opposed by the Nelson Examiner see NE 3, 10 and 14 March 1860. With the outbreak of the war in Taranaki the Lyttleton Times announced it would stop agitating for separation until the war was over, see LT 31 March 1860.

2. See for example: NC 6 March 1860; NE 7 and 10 March, 23 May 1860.

was to bring the rebels to their senses and prevent waverers from becoming rebels, was not administered.

The war policy had been initially welcomed as a cheap solution to the native problems of the North Island. But the settlers had expected speedy success. The lack of an immediate and decisive victory led to a willingness to question the war policy which began to be increasingly unpopular.³ As the war dragged on inconclusively it became apparent that the war policy was creating new problems but solved none of the old ones. Southerners became apprehensive that the war was becoming a threat to their progress by pilfering their pockets,⁴ and by checking immigration and encouraging re-emigration to Australia.⁵ South Island interests were still being neglected - now by a "Maori phobic" general Government too far away to be affected by South Island public opinion. It was claimed that although South Island development outstripped the North, the southerners were at the mercy of the North Island and victims of a North Island problem.⁶ It is not surprising that arguments for separation were revived. By the end of 1860, realizing that the Imperial Government was unlikely to meet the

3. Fox to Godley, 4 September 1860, Canterbury Papers; F.D. Bell, PD 1858-60, p. 263, 9 August 1860; LT 22 September 1860.
4. Weld to Godley, 24 August 1860, Canterbury Papers; LT 1 September 1860; OC 27 July 1860, Letter from "An Earnest Lover of Mankind".
5. Weld to Godley, 18 July 1860, Canterbury Papers; OC 27 July 1860, Letter from "An Earnest Lover of Mankind"; see also J. Williamson, PD 1858-60, p. 172, 1 August 1860.
6. LT 29 August and 19 September 1860. See also: F.D. Bell to Gore Browne, 29 May 1862, Gore Browne Papers, 1/2/146; T.B. Gillies to Mantell, 17 April 1863, Mantell Papers, 286.

costs of the prolonged war, South Islanders began again to seek in separation an escape from entanglement in the difficult and potentially expensive native problems of the north.⁷ Separation became increasingly popular as the possibility of extending the hostilities into the Waikato and the need for an active native policy raised the spectre of spiralling costs and increasing financial demands. The influx of population into Otago following the gold discoveries in 1861 necessitated more consideration of Otago problems than a central government pre-occupied with native affairs would be able to give. It became too apparent that while the southern provinces were asked to contribute to the financing of solutions to North Island problems their own local interests and problems would be neglected.⁸ The southerners determined not to be governed any longer from Auckland and by a "Maori ministry".⁹ Otago began a cry for the total separation of the two islands;¹⁰ in Canterbury, the Otago separationists were accused of identifying Otago interests as the interests of the "Middle Island" ¹¹ and Crosbie Ward put forward a plan for the separate administration of the two islands while keeping the colony united.¹²

7. LT 17 July, 19 September, 14 November and 21 December 1860. See also: Sewell to Hall, 23 November 1860, Hall Papers; Fitzgerald to Selge, 7 December 1860, Selge Letters, 2/15; Bell to Mantell, 11 July 1860, Mantell Papers, 243.
8. For instance in 1863 the Government neglected to issue writs for the new Otago Provincial Council. See Gillies to Mantell, 17 April 1863, Mantell Papers, 286. See also: Bell to Mantell, 26 December 1861, Mantell Papers, 243; Bell to Gore Browne, 6 April 1862, Gore Browne Papers, 1/2/145.
9. Bell to Gore Browne, 29 May 1862, Gore Browne Papers, 1/2/146.
10. On the Otago separation movement see: W.P. Morrell, The Provincial System in New Zealand, pp. 124-138; McIntock, History of Otago, pp. 555-575.
11. Press 7 June 1862.
12. Ward to Hall, 7 May, 2 June 1862, Hall Papers.

Separation, in one form or another, was always offered as a panacea for the differing interests and problems of the two islands, but it was to remain a pipe dream, never achieving realization because of the divided interests of the South Island provinces themselves.

Though the war policy was being questioned and becoming unpopular this did not imply disapproval of the war. Popular feeling was still in favour of thrashing the Maoris and against any suggestions of a patched up peace.¹³ Few settlers were sympathetic towards the Maori or were troubled by the doubts cast on the validity of the Waitara purchase by Bishop Selwyn, Archdeacon Hadfield and William Martin. The justice and inevitability of the war was accepted or simply assumed. The war policy was unpopular and criticised not because the settlers objected to the war or had come to realize its injustice, but because it was not fulfilling settler expectations of a quick and easy solution to the native problems. It was the prospect of a prolonged indecisive war with the attendant financial burdens that dismayed the South Islander.

The settler was concerned with the question of responsibility for the war and its costs rather than the moral question of its justice. The settlers were agreed that the war was an imperial war to maintain British supremacy and the Queen's sovereignty, and therefore hoped, even expected, that Britain would bear the main burden.¹⁴ There was in fact little opposition, in Parliament or out of doors, to the war as such, except from

13. Sewell, Journals, iv, 24 February, 20 April, 23 June and 24 July 1861. See also LT 20 March 1861.

14. See for example LT 17 July 1861.

the small humanitarian missionary group.¹⁵ In Parliament there was no "philo-Maori", "peace-at-any-price" party, though these labels were used as terms of abuse. There was general agreement that the war, being a native rebellion, should be "vigorously prosecuted" until British supremacy was re-established. It was on the question how and why the Maoris came to be in rebellion that colonial opinion divided. Opponents of the Government emphasised the mismanagement of native affairs by Gore Browne and previous governors, suggested that Gore Browne had been egged on by interested colonial ministers, and claimed that though conflict with the Maoris was inevitable, the wrong issues and occasion had been used to begin hostilities.¹⁶ Government supporters on the other hand held that the war was forced upon a reluctant governor by truculent Maoris.¹⁷ However, opponents and supporters of the Government were agreed that it was the Imperial Government's responsibility to get the colony out of its mess.¹⁸ Indeed, much of the colonial opinion on the war, once it became apparent that it was going to be a protracted struggle, may be interpreted as attempts on the part of the colonists, anxious to avoid any demands on their financial resources, to saddle the British Government with the responsibility and the expenses of the conflict.

* * * *

15. Even the missionary body was divided over the war, see Sinclair, Origins of the Maori Wars, pp. 222-225. See also P.C. Matheson, The Views of the New Zealand Clergy of 1860 on Race Relations, unpublished research exercise, OU, (1959), Hocken Library.
16. See for example Fox to Godley, 5 May 1860, 28 June 1860 and 4 September 1860, Canterbury Papers; Fox to Hall, 31 January 1861, Hall Papers; Bell to Mantell, 26 December 1861, Mantell Papers, 243; LT 29 August 1860.
17. Stafford to Godley, 28 May 1860, Canterbury Papers; Weld to Godley, 18 July 1860, Canterbury Papers.
18. Fox to Godley, 5 May 1860; Stafford to Godley, 28 May 1860; Weld to Godley, 18 May 1860; Canterbury Papers. See also OC 19 May 1860.

The opinion of the Nelson newspapers on the Taranaki war after the initial optimism, with its hope of a short, sharp struggle, had begun to fade, reflects the South Islanders' despair of the consequences of a protracted conflict. Anxious that the native problems of the North be solved once and for all they were equally anxious that their future should not be mortgaged with war debts. Their hope lay in convincing the Home Government of the dangerous nature and seriousness of the situation in Taranaki, and that it was an Imperial affair for which the Colony was neither responsible nor financially liable. Further, Nelson opinion, as it was expressed by the two newspapers and by Nelson politicians, was determined by political, both local and colonial (and indeed imperial), considerations, rather than by moral or legal principles, or indeed by simple racial antagonism. The war issue, and the question of future native policy in general, were mere pawns in the political game being played in the provinces or between the provinces.

By the end of May 1860 it had become apparent that the war would be a prolonged struggle. The frustration of the settlers, denied the pleasure of seeing the Maoris at last thrashed and humbled, was increased by the seemingly incomprehensible conduct of the British troops in Taranaki. Though the military commanders were blamed and criticised for their inaction, the Nelson Examiner admitted that, in the absence of any official attempt to supply information, dubious private sources, "denounced as unfair, one-sided, or altogether unworthy of belief", were being relied upon for information on

the Taranaki situation.¹⁹ The Examiner had frequently called on the Government to explain its conduct of the war and to ensure that "authentic information" about the war was conveyed to the public.²⁰ However it was not only the conduct of the war that required explanation, the whole government policy on the Taranaki question had suddenly become puzzling,²¹ or rather it was realized that the government had never bothered to state its policy (or in fact given any indication it even had a policy). Between the commencement of hostilities in March and the meeting of the General Assembly in August the Government had made no statement about the war or of its policy. Not that it mattered; the newspapers, and the settlers on the whole, had made up their own minds about the justice of the war, and initially were content simply to assume the Government possessed an acceptable policy. In April the claims of the humanitarian anti-war critics, that the Waitara purchase had been insufficiently investigated because Kingi's tribal rights had been ignored, were summarily dismissed and a bellicose public meeting in Nelson voiced its approval of the war and the "decision with which the Government has acted in confronting a native rebellion in Taranaki".²² The Government was reassured by the Examiner that as long as it "acts with decision and firmness, it may rest upon the support of the whole British population of the colony."²³ But then early in May Frederick Weld's address to his Wairau constituents²⁴ raised doubts as to the Government's policy and

19. 11 July 1860. For criticism of the Examiner's reporting see NC 20 April 1860, Letter from "Senex Albus"; NE 11 April 1860, Letter from "Fairplay".

20. NE 14 April, 28 April, 12 May, 23 May and 11 July 1860.

21. NE 26 May and 30 May 1860.

22. NE 25 April 1860 and see above Chapter IV, pp.83-84.

23. NE 25 April 1860.

24. See NE 9 May 1860.

intentions. Weld's letter not only suggested that the Government was changing its ground from denying Kingi had any rights, to the argument that the rights Kingi claimed were tribal rights which were incompatible with British sovereignty, but that in so doing it was admitting its original case against Kingi was not clear cut and entering the difficult controversy over native rights.²⁵ The Nelson Colonist, for instance, called for a judicial enquiry into the questions of native tenure and native rights compatible with British sovereignty and safeguarded by the Treaty of Waitangi.²⁶ The Examiner sensed its weakness, attempting to act as a government apologist without having accurate information about the policy it was trying to defend, and fell back on the argument that once force had been appealed to the question of origins was merely academic and that the Maoris had to be punished for rebellion, looting and murder.

But whatever force there may be in the considerations we have now mentioned regarding the casus belli first put forward, there can be nothing to justify the utter repudiation and open defiance of British authority; still less anything to excuse the rising of the natives along the coast to the South of New Plymouth. Uninjured and unprovoked, they came upon the settlers, marauding and murdering

In advocating the punishment of the rebels the editor of the Examiner perceived the other horn of the dilemma:

in proportion to our conviction that they deserved a signal and exemplary punishment, is our surprise and disappointment that the numerous and well-appointed force, which was commissioned for this duty, should have returned without performing it. 27

The Examiner welcomed the suggestion contained in Weld's letter that the

25. NE 26 May and 30 May 1860.

26. NC 22 May and 19 June 1860.

27. NE 30 May 1860.

Government had a plan to bring the whole native population under complete subjection to the Queen but was now less confident that this would be done promptly and decisively.²⁸ Conscious that prolonged warfare would entail demands on the colony's financial resources, the Examiner called for the meeting of the General Assembly to discuss the Government's policy and the share of the costs the colony would have to bear.²⁹ Significantly, the Examiner added it would be no business of the Assembly to discuss the origins or the justice of the war.³⁰

The defeat of the British troops at Puke-ta-kauere on 27 June may be regarded as a turning point. The Maori King meetings held in the Waikato during April and May, followed by the involvement of Waikato Maoris in the Puke-ta-kauere affray confirmed the settlers' suspicions that the whole conflict had a more serious and wider aspect to it than a mere local land dispute in Taranaki. It was thought that the plan of a Maori conspiracy to drive the Pakeha out of the country had been uncovered prematurely by the outbreak in Taranaki.³¹ Further, though the defeat eventually led to a more realistic assessment of the capabilities and resources of the Maoris,³² the settlers found it easier to conclude that British success was unlikely without a change of military command.³³ The Examiner attacked the Government for not supplying an official account of the Puke-ta-kauere encounter and

28. NE 26 May 1860. See also NE 23 May and 30 May 1860. Most Examiner editorials between 9 May and 6 June dealt with points raised by Weld's letter.

29. NE 23 May, 26 May and 30 May 1860.

30. NE 6 June 1860.

31. NE 20 June, 5 July (special issue), 7 and 11 July 1860. See also: Weld to Godley, 18 July 1860, Canterbury Papers; Bell to Mantell, 11 July 1860, Mantell Papers, 243.

32. NE 14 July 1860.

33. ibid.

argued that if the account given by its Taranaki correspondent³⁴ proved to be correct, then Colonel Gold was incompetent and should be relieved of his command.³⁵ However the editor of the Examiner did not accept the fact of a British defeat at the hands of the Maoris, a superstitious people fearing the power of the white man and terrified of his guns.³⁶ Colonel Gold's failure to provide support for Major Nelson's attack on the Puke-ta-kauere pahs, the editor argued, merely prevented a British victory from being decisive!

The late fight at Waitara must have abated the boastful self-confidence of the Natives. A blow has been struck with one hand; how came it that the other was tied up, when it was wanted to follow up and make that blow decisive? 37

In actual fact the Puke-ta-kauere pahs proved impregnable and the British suffered a dismal defeat, almost a complete rout, retreating in a disorderly fashion leaving their dead on the field.³⁸ The responsibility of Gold for the lack of success is also debatable. The weather, the day being "one of the wettest and stormiest of a wet and stormy winter",³⁹ and the absence of

34. Probably J.C. Richmond who was writing at this time for both the Taranaki Herald and the Nelson Examiner. See: J.C. Richmond to Mary Richmond, 8 June 1860, Richmond-Atkinson Papers, i, p. 595; DNZB, ii, pp. 239-240. Richmond later became editor of the Examiner in 1862. See: J.C. Richmond to Mary Richmond, 13 December 1861, Richmond-Atkinson Papers, i, p. 733; DNZB, ii, p. 240.

35. NE 11 July 1860.

36. NE 23 May 1860.

37. NE 11 July 1860.

38. T. Nelson to Major of the Brigade, 27 June 1860, AJHR, 1860, E-3, pp.48-49. J.E. Alexander, Incidents of the Maori War, (1863), pp. 153-164. Cowan, The New Zealand Wars, i, pp. 185-189. / cf. A.S. Atkinson, Journal, 29 June 1860, Richmond-Atkinson Papers, i, p. 599 where Atkinson wrote: "As at Waireka, it was nominally a defeat, when it might easily have been a complete victory,"

39. Taranaki Herald, 30 June 1860.

the pre-arranged racket to signal the beginning of the British attack,⁴⁰ led Gold to think Nelson had postponed the attack. When heavy firing was heard in New Plymouth, Gold, who was in bed with influenza at the time,⁴¹ marched the New Plymouth detachment towards Puke-ta-kauere as far as the Waiongana River. As the river was in flood and difficult to ford, and, as the firing had ceased, Gold considered there was no need for assistance and marched his men back to town.⁴²

The Nelson Examiner editor's reluctance to admit the defeat of British soldiers, his anxiety to convey the impression, initially given by Taranaki colonists,⁴³ of a blow struck against the Maoris, and his peevish self-righteous attacks on Colonel Gold, may be ascribed simply to a sanguine, almost irrational, faith in the superiority of the British soldier. Almost paranoid in his assertions of European superiority, the defeat of the British Army by "a bunch of savages" was inconceivable. Lack of military success was attributed to the personal deficiencies of the military commanders rather than explained by an appeal to the plain fact that almost every factor was against

40. Apparently an artillery sergeant forgot to fire the rockets. Alexander, op.cit., p. 157.

41. Alexander, op.cit., pp. 163-164. See also NE 7 July 1860.

42. Alexander, op.cit., p. 164. For an account of Puke-ta-kauere operation see Cowan, New Zealand Wars, i, pp. 183-189. An imaginative but accurate reconstruction of the battle is given by Errol Brathwaite in his novel on the Taranaki wars, The Flying Fish, (1964), pp. 235-378. The main Examiner report of the battle was an "extra" on 5 July 1860.

43. Accounts of the Puke-ta-kauere attack in the Examiner's "extra" of 5 July were from Taranaki sources which contained assertions that the British would have won a decisive victory had Gold provided reinforcements. See also A.S. Atkinson, Journal, 29 June 1860, Richmond-Atkinson Papers, i, p. 599.

easy British success; the inadequate British force available and its inexperience in the guerilla type warfare the Maoris were particularly skilled at; the skill and prowess of the Maori in warfare already demonstrated in the conflicts of the 'forties; the nature and conditions of the Taranaki terrain which favoured the Maoris (who were familiar with its features) and prevented the effective use of regular troops. However, it is possible to offer another explanation, one assuming more rationality, of the Examiner's unrealistic attitude at this time. Significantly, the Nelson Colonist published, on the day after the Examiner's "extra" appeared, an editorial arguing that the British defeat at Puke-ta-kauere pointed to the courage and strength of the Maoris, and, probably with the Examiner in mind, that

The conceited priggishness of those who "never set squadron in the field" will be somewhat abated by the last intelligence from the battle field of New Zealand.

The Colonist's editorial after referring to the bad conditions existing in New Plymouth, described in a "private letter" from Taranaki reprinted on the opposite page, went on to place the responsibility on

... the authorities, be they who they may, who have entered on a warfare that has disorganized our society, and which they are not prepared vigorously to push to a conclusion....⁴⁴

Earlier, in April, in discussing the Waireka fiasco, the Colonist suggested that the Governor had been unwise to commence hostilities against the Maoris while the Imperial forces were insufficient and warned against condemning those in charge of military affairs by saying "accusations of cowardice and incapacity are hard to substantiate."⁴⁵ William Fox, the acknowledged "leader

44. NC 6 July 1860.

45. NC 6 April 1860.

of the opposition" to the Stafford ministry and a critic of the war policy, had not only condemned the war as "unjust and unnecessary" but, in his letter to the Wanganui Chronicle reprinted by the Colonist, attacked the Governor and "his advisers" for "plunging the colony into war and with so little preparation" and thus placing the settlers

absolutely at the mercy of tribes with whom King [Wiremu Kingi] was known to have intimate relations, and who might, if they had so chosen, have swept away the population of whole districts before their victims could almost have heard that a war was impending. 46

The British defeats at Waireka and Puke-ta-kauere were used by the Colonist to criticize the government for precipitating conflict with the Maoris while the British forces were inadequate and the colony unprepared. The Colonist attacked the Governor and the Stafford ministry⁴⁷ rather than the military command; the British defeats were not blamed on the incompetence of Gold but attributed to the strength and superior resources of the insurgent Maoris. The Colonist could take a dispassionate view of the military defeats, they could be used against the Central Government it opposed or to taunt its local opponent, the Examiner. On the other hand, the Examiner, as a supporter of the Stafford government, had to maintain at least a semblance of confidence in the Government's war policy and to defend it against the corrosive attacks of the Colonist. It is suggested, then, that the attitude

46. Wanganui Chronicle, 27 April 1860. Letter reprinted in NC 5 June 1860. The Examiner never reprinted Fox's letter but the editor was aware of its argument as he referred to Fox's suggestion that the question of native rights should be discussed in the General Assembly. NE 30 May 1860. Fox thought conflict with the Maoris would have occurred sooner or later but criticized the occasion taken to begin hostilities and the lack of military preparation before beginning the war. Fox to Godley, 5 May 1860, Canterbury Papers.

47. See also NC 28 September and 12 October 1860.

of the Examiner may be explained by its role as the Government's apologist in Nelson. To admit the inferiority and weakness of the British forces available, or to acknowledge military defeat at the hands of the Maoris, would be to concede the cogency of the political opposition's accusations of government foolhardiness and irresponsibility. Having made claims of the invincibility of the British soldier, the adequacy of a "numerous and well-appointed force" to cope with the situation, and of the inferiority of the Maoris, it is perhaps not surprising that the editor of the Examiner, confronted with the hard facts of military defeat, should attempt to construe it as merely a nominal defeat and to find a scapegoat in Colonel Gold.

The repulse suffered by the British at Puke-ta-kauere was a turning point of the Taranaki war in other ways as well. The Colonial Office realized the seriousness of the military situation in New Zealand and ordered two more regiments to the colony.⁴⁸ Conscious that approval, both in the colony and at Home, of his actions depended on the defeat of Wiremu Kingi, Gore Browne became increasingly anxious; he wrote to Gold asking for "some unequivocal success" to reinstate British prestige.⁴⁹ Then, as if in answer to the Examiner's constant appeals, Colonel Gold was promoted and thus made ineligible to continue his command.⁵⁰ Major-General Pratt, commanding officer in Australia, decided to take command in New Zealand himself. Finally, the long awaited meeting of the General Assembly was set down for 25 July.

48. Dalton, War and Politics, p. 113.

49. Gore Browne to Gold, 7 July and 14 July 1860, AJHR, 1860, E-3C, p. 13.

50. W.P. Morrell, British Colonial Policy in the Mid-Victorian Age, (1969), p. 246.

Though the arrival of Major-General Pratt was seen as heralding the beginning of a more decisive military phase in the war,⁵¹ it was not until the British success at Mahoetahi in November that the tide began to turn, restoring some colonial confidence in the military command.⁵² Impatient for a military victory, neither the Governor nor the settlers appreciated, or understood, the slow process of consolidation and strengthening of the British position in Taranaki undertaken by Pratt during August and September.⁵³ Indeed, the Nelson Examiner began to chaff Pratt for his seeming pacifism:

Is General Pratt any relation to John Bright; or is he in any way mixed up with the respectable peace-at-all-price party?

The Examiner went on to speculate that perhaps Pratt had a secret plan to encourage the natives to become over-confident of their strength so that they would group together in the open and be destroyed at one blow.⁵⁴ The editor was beginning to realize the difficult nature of guerilla warfare in Taranaki. Though he admitted the Maori skill at bush warfare, the editor clung to the myth of the fearless and invincible British soldier bridled by timid commanders. The war, the editor argued, had so far shown

that the Generals and Colonels in her Majesty's service are no match at present for even a much inferior native force in the bush and in their own peculiar style of warfare. 55

However, on his arrival in New Zealand Pratt demanded a carte blanche and gave the impression that it was the Governor who was hindering the

51. NE 8 August 1860.

52. NE 17 November 1860.

53. See: Correspondence between Gore Browne and Pratt, AJHR, 1860, E-3c, pp. 13-24. H.R. Richmond to J.C. Richmond, 18 August 1860, Richmond-Atkinson Papers, i, p. 626. See also: Rusden, History of New Zealand, ii, pp. 23-25; Sinclair, Origins of the Maori Wars, p. 230; Dalton, War and Politics, pp. 121-122.

54. NE 17 September 1860.

55. NE 29 September 1860. See also 10 October and 17 October 1860.

military in Taranaki. Pratt suggested that Gold had been on the defensive under instructions from the Governor.⁵⁶ The Examiner was caught again in its dilemma as the defender of a policy which it did not know fully and which was not being acted upon with determination or success. Pratt, it was argued, must be shielding his subordinates for criticism of the Governor was impossible.⁵⁷ The editor did not admit that there was

an uneasy feeling abroad, an idea that it [the government] is still halting between two opinions, a want of frank outspoken determination in its councils, and an apparent indecision in its conduct which paralyses action, invites distrust, and chills co-operation. 58

Delivering an Hobbesian discourse on the nature and function of government, the Examiner reminded its readers that "Government represents the collective force and power of the community", the Leviathan "must be supreme, to avoid being contemptible."⁵⁹ But, the editor hastened to add, criticism was quite consistent with a "general support of the Government."⁶⁰ It was with relief that, on the eve of the Nelson elections for the 1861 General Assembly, the Examiner could claim, against its opponents, that the parliamentary papers revealed a consistent government military policy and the inefficiency of Gold.⁶¹ This was of course to misrepresent the facts.⁶²

56. NE 8 August 1860. Pratt obviously had seen the correspondence between Gore Browne and Gold (AJHR, 1860, E-3c, pp. 3-5.) which had not yet been made public.

57. NE 11 August 1860.

58. 8 August 1860.

59. NE 11 August 1860.

60. NE 22 August 1860.

61. NE 28 November 1860.

62. Historians are generally agreed that Gold was not a good general; however, the published papers did reveal that on several occasions in March, April, and May, the Governor told Gold to maintain a defensive policy and to avoid attacking Wiremu Kingi. AJHR, 1860, E-3c, pp. 3-5. Dalton, War and Politics, p. 111. Sinclair, Origins of the Maori Wars, pp. 229-230.

Though Pratt's saps became famous objects of ridicule, they provided Pratt with the means of successfully attacking Maori strongholds. Each damaging blow Pratt struck against the Maoris was enthusiastically acclaimed by the Examiner.⁶³ Reports that the missionaries were making peace moves were interpreted as indications from the Maoris that, beginning to respect the British soldier, they saw the struggle as hopeless and wanted peace.⁶⁴ The defeat of Kingi would leave the way clear to deal with the real problem - the Maori King Movement in the Waikato.⁶⁵ The arrival in March of Lieutenant-General Cameron, neither inexperienced, like Gold, nor old, as was Pratt, and eager for action, was seen as confirmation that at last the issue of British supremacy in the North Island would be decided once and for all.

From General Cameron's arrival we hope to date a new era in New Zealand warfare, and to see the majesty of England's name vindicated, her power made terrible to those who have opposed her by force.... 66

Carried away by his excitement and anticipation that the long awaited victory would soon be a reality, and confident that the Government he supported had decided on a policy to establish the "Queen's supremacy by force of arms", the editor of the Examiner, in an editorial bristling with references to past humiliations and frustrations, did not attempt to hide his latent racialism - at last the wretched North Island native problem would be solved "and what the condition of the Maori may be when that object is effected, it would be a waste of time to conjecture."⁶⁷

63. NE 17 November 1860; NE 9 January and 6 February 1861.

64. NE 27 February 1861.

65. NE 6 February 1861.

66. NE 30 March 1861.

67. NE 23 March 1860.

The prognostications of victory by the Examiner were to prove premature. As 1861 progressed each of the Examiner's hopes was dashed in turn. In April, the Taranaki war suddenly came to an end but the rebels remained unpunished. On 5 July Stafford's ministry was defeated in a vote of no confidence and the Examiner's arch-political-enemy, William Fox, became premier. Hardly having had time to recover from the shock of the fall of Stafford, the Examiner was staggered by the news of the recall of Gore Browne and the return of Sir George Grey as Governor. The expected invasion of the Waikato did not eventuate in 1861, indeed it was not to come until July 1863, when an editor of the Examiner, Alfred Domett, was himself premier. Instead of a Waikato war, at the end of the year, the South Island settlers faced the prospects of financing Grey's runanga scheme. The arrival of a new military commander in August 1860 did not fulfill the expectations that it would lead to the war being conducted with a new vigour and determination so as to bring it to a speedy successful conclusion.

* * * *

The General Assembly which opened in Auckland at the end of July 1860 was to satisfy neither supporters of the government's war policy nor their humanitarian opponents.⁶⁸ No clear statement of policy was made by the Government; the ministry preferred not to take the opportunity offered to "account for its stewardship" and gave the impression of trying to with-hold,

68. For an account of the 1860 General Assembly see: Dalton, War and Politics, pp. 115-121, Dalton wrongly locates the Assembly in Wellington, see p. 115; Sinclair, Origins of the Maori Wars, pp. 208-215. Contemporary accounts, often biased, are given by: Saunders, History of New Zealand, i, pp. 398-418; Rusden, History of New Zealand, ii, pp. 10-22; C.R. Carter, Life and Recollections of a New Zealand Colonist, (1866), ii, pp. 150-159. Saunders was a Nelson opponent of the Stafford ministry and Carter a member of the Wellington group of politicians supporting Fox.

rather than to convey, information.⁶⁹ Though Stafford's ministry was attacked for getting the colony involved in a war, the expected opposition attack on the war did not develop with any intensity. Indeed the opposition leaders, Fox and Featherston, had both made it clear before the Assembly met that though Gore Browne had blundered into the war he must be supported in order to bring the war to a successful conclusion.⁷⁰ In fact the members' attitudes towards the war merely reflected those of the majority of their constituents - all agreed it was an Imperial war to be vigorously prosecuted. However, as the session progressed the colonists' confidence was gradually eroded. From the Governor's opening speech and from the debates it was becoming increasingly apparent that neither the Governor nor the ministry were sure of their grounds for commencing hostilities against Kingi, or that either could produce inexpensive measures likely to improve race relations once the fighting ceased. Indeed, the colonists soon became impatient of the lengthy debates on native affairs and the southerners feared that the war question would hinder settlement of their provincial problems. For instance, both Canterbury and Otago saw the opposition of the Wellington politicians to the war as lessening their chances of repealing the obnoxious New Provinces Act, before its effects were felt by themselves.⁷¹ Further, the official papers printed and presented to the Assembly added to the doubts about the validity of the Waitara purchase, and, more frightening, revealed that the Home government was neither as convinced as the New Zealand government and colonists that the war was an "imperial" rather than a "settlers" war, nor were prepared to foot whatever costs it entailed.

69. NE 15 August and 22 August 1860. CS 30 August 1860.

70. Fox to Hall, 24 May 1860, Hall Papers. Featherston to McLean, 1 May 1860, McLean Papers (type-script), 17, pp. 157-159.

71. LT 19 May 1860. OW 6 October 1860.

It has been argued above that the contrasting approaches to, and opinions on, the problems presented by the Taranaki war and its prosecution held by the two Nelson newspapers are reflections of the conflicting interests they represented in local provincial politics, and may be interpreted in relation to their attitudes towards the Colonial ministry headed by Stafford. During the provincial period, politics and personalities in the provinces and at the centre impinged ^{on} and affected one another, and this was particularly so in the case of Nelson. Though the nature of politics in the 1850s has been analysed by the late D.G. Herron,⁷² there has been little research, which is convincing, on the nature of European political conflict and divisions during the 'sixties.⁷³ It would be worthwhile, then, to make an attempt to clarify the nature of colonial politics during 1860 and 1861. A brief discussion of the nature of the political divisions may throw some light on both General Assembly politics and local politics in the provinces, and may further help us to understand Nelson opinion on the war and native policy during the later part of 1860 and in 1861.

72. D.G. Herron, The Structure and Course of New Zealand Politics, 1853-58, unpublished PhD thesis, O.U., 1959; "Alsatia or Utopia? New Zealand Society and Politics in the eighteen-fifties", Landfall, vol.13, no.4 (December 1959), pp. 324-341; "Provincialism and Centralism", Studies of a Small Democracy, (ed. R. Chapman and K. Sinclair), pp. 10-32.

73. W.P. Morrell, The Provincial System in New Zealand 1852-76, pp. 115-121. Professor Morrell's book was written in 1932, the second edition, published in 1964, is unrevised. See also Morrell, "The Colonial Period", Ends and Means in New Zealand Politics, (ed. R.M. Chapman), pp. 7-12. A recent study of New Zealand politics between 1858 and 1861 using the structural analysis approach and purporting to be a sequel to the work by Herron is G.A. Wood, The Political Structure of New Zealand, 1858-61, unpublished PhD thesis, O.U., 1965.

It is tempting to interpret the conflict in the 1860 General Assembly as being between two distinct "parties"; the "centralists" led by Stafford and the "provincialists" led by Fox.⁷⁴ But such an interpretation tends to elevate "centralism" and "provincialism" into opposing constitutional principles, and to give to the political rivalries more constitutional significance than they actually had at the time.⁷⁵ Herron, in his studies on the politics of the eighteen-fifties, demonstrated that centralism and provincialism were alternative methods of satisfying personal and provincial aspirations; provincial rivalries were of more importance than rivalry between constitutional principles - the more general concept being evoked or used as a means to forward provincial interests.⁷⁶ It is suggested that a similar interpretation may be placed on politics in the early eighteen-sixties.⁷⁷ The Lyttleton Times in 1860 thought the terms "provincialist" and "centralist" should be dropped as they were misleading, the real object of the politician was to satisfy the needs of his own locality.⁷⁸ Writing

74. Morrell, Provincial System, pp. 117-120. Morrell, "The Colonial Period", Ends and Means in New Zealand Politics, pp. 9-10. Sinclair, Origins of the Maori Wars, p. 211. Sinclair, Maori Land League, pp. 44-45. Wood, Political Structure, pp. 111-133. Dr Wood provides a detailed analysis of the division lists in 1860 but falls into the structuralistic fallacy and exaggerates the existence of two parties in the General Assembly. An historian should not only ask how men voted but also why men voted the way they did.

75. See: Morrell, ibid.; Sinclair, ibid.; Wood, Political Structure, p. 116, writes "The centralists tended to have a "high" view of government, The ultra-provincialists wished to reduce the Governor's powers" But cf. D.G. Herron, "Provincialism and Centralism", Studies of a Small Democracy, pp. 10-32.

76. See in particular: Herron, "Provincialism and Centralism", op.cit., pp. 29-30; and The Structure and Course of New Zealand Politics, pp. 631-640.

77. But cf. Wood, op.cit., p.111: "... the centralist-provincialist explanation of political division which Dr Herron strongly criticises, in 1860 is not a school test book misconception, but the basic factor in general politics."

78. LT 4 February 1860.

in 1869, Frederick Weld considered the intense provincial nature of politics ^{with} members going to the General Assembly "as bands of provincial delegates", to be the cause of the ministerial instability of the 'sixties.⁷⁹ Stafford and Fox provided alternative loci of power rather than alternative constitutional principles. Canterbury and Otago politicians generally opposed Stafford because the New Provinces Act, for which Stafford was responsible in 1858, presented a threat to Otago with her vigorous Murihiku separation movement, and a danger to Canterbury with a nascent movement for separation at Timaru.⁸⁰ However in 1860, Canterbury and Otago supported the Stafford ministry and saved it from defeat; Canterbury in order to secure its railway and loan bill,⁸¹ Otago because Fox's expressed views on native affairs were distasteful.⁸² Nor were the common settlers interested in constitutional issues as such, or even "national" issues; the 1860-61 General Elections were dull and apathetic affairs, fought neither over the war issue nor over the balance of power between central and provincial governments.⁸³

Politicians during the provincial period were divided by personal ambitions, provincial conflicts, and provincial interests, rather than by political principles and ideals rigidly held. There was in the colony no

79. F.A. Weld, Notes on New Zealand Affairs, (1869), pp. 64-65.

80. PD, 1858-60, passim: pp. 85-89, Cargill; pp. 50-51, Olliver; p. 109, Moorhouse.

81. Fox to Godley, 4 September 1860, Canterbury Papers. Mrs. Selwyn to Mrs. Abraham, 4 August 1860, Selwyn Letters. T.B. Gillies in OW, 14 December 1860.

82. OW 16 June 1860.

83. See G.A. Wood, "The Electorate's Verdict - the electoral system and the New Zealand General Election of 1860-61", The Feel of Truth, (ed. Peter Munz, 1969), pp. 139-158, see especially pp. 149-155.

firm basis for political parties. The lack of conflicting principles, the social homogeneity of the General Assembly,⁸⁴ and the small number⁸⁵ but high turnover of members⁸⁶ all acted against the development of a systematic party combat in the Assembly. Instead of two distinct and distinguishable parties contesting clear cut issues, there were a multitude of cliques coalescing into caucuses and forming factions, or disintegrating into individuals as expedient.⁸⁷ At the close of the 1860 General Assembly Henry Sewell wrote that though it was usual and perhaps convenient to talk of two extreme parties, centralist and provincialist, in fact "everybody fights for himself" in the Assembly.⁸⁸ Many factors, petty and important, divided politicians and influenced their voting behaviour: the urge for power, personal animosities, local political rivalries, religious, national and social prejudices,

84. Wood, Political Structure, p. 74.

85. Thomson, Story of New Zealand, ii, p. 243, wrote that the small number of members in the General Assembly meant that some measures were settled out of doors and "others by whispering within". Dr Monro, PD, 1854-55, p. 39 argued that a party system did not develop because there were not enough "men of station, independence, and leisure, as candidates for public office from motives of honourable ambition . . .," consequently instead of party strife there was "the strife of individuals."

86. Wood, Political Structure, pp. 64-65.

87. But cf. Wood, op.cit., pp. 121-136. It may be suggested that political conflict during the provincial period in New Zealand, in the absence of definable parties, is best described as "faction politics" using the terminology of "factions, cliques, juntos, and caucuses" developed by William Nisbet Chambers to describe pre-party politics in the United States during the 1770s and 1780s. See: William Nisbet Chambers, Political Parties in a New Nation, (1963), pp. 17-33, see especially p. 26. The term "clique" is used frequently in this chapter. The term is used in the sense defined by Chambers, that is to describe a pre-party political grouping "whose relationships depended upon a family, a commanding individual, or a close coterie of personal associates."

88. Sewell to John Hall, 23 November 1860, Hall Papers.

jobbery and patronage.

The basic ingredients of many political manoeuvres seem to have been individuals seeking personal power, provincial parties anxious to thwart political opponents ..., and provincial blocs concerned ... with the interests of a particular province. ⁸⁹

In 1860 support for the Government came basically from Taranaki and Nelson, whose representatives formed the nucleus of the Stafford-Richmond caucus in the General Assembly. But to describe this caucus as a party "joined by common principles - principally that of maintaining a unitary and not a federal state"⁹⁰ is to overlook more obvious reasons its supporters had. Taranaki's position in the North Island was similar to Nelson's in the South. They were both relatively weak and landless compared to those provinces with which they were united by geography, and they both exercised a disproportionate amount of influence in the central government - Taranaki through C.W. Richmond, the Colonial Treasurer and Minister for Native Affairs, and Nelson through the premier, E.W. Stafford, a former Nelson superintendent. Taranaki support, during the war, of the Government upon which it depended for funds and troops is hardly surprising. In actual fact Stafford's "centralist" party was a Nelson provincial clique supported by Taranaki. The Stafford ministry represented a brief period of Nelson power at the centre of Government. The Nelson members in the 1860 General Assembly were linked not by principles but by landowning interests, mainly

89. Herron, "Provincialism and Centralism", Studies of a Small Democracy, p. 30.

90. Wood, Political Structure, p. 115.

in Marlborough,⁹¹ and by their opposition, in Nelson provincial politics, to John Robinson, the Superintendent, who unsuccessfully contested the City seats against Domett and Stafford in the 1860-61 elections. The Nelson representatives were collectively dubbed the "Nelson Contingent"⁹² and the "Stafford Clique".⁹³ The solidarity of Nelson support of the Stafford ministry was broken in the 1861 General Assembly by the election of Alfred Saunders, who defeated Kelling, in Waimea, significantly a stronghold of Robinson supporters,⁹⁴ and by the defeat of Weld by W.H. Eyes, an opponent of the run-holding faction in Marlborough provincial politics.⁹⁵ On the eve of the opening of the 1860 General Assembly, the Nelson Examiner was confident that the Nelson representatives would support the executive in "a decided and straightforward fashion".⁹⁶

91. All but H.E. Curtis, who was a merchant, owned land in Marlborough. Wood, Political Structure, pp. 366-367, lists occupations of the representatives. McIntosh, Marlborough, pp. 416-422, lists original section holders and run-holders in Marlborough. The Nelson representatives in the 1860 Assembly were: H.E. Curtis, Alfred Domett, J.F.A. Kelling, David Monro, E.W. Stafford, F.A. Weld, and J.B. Wemyss.
92. NC 23 November 1860 carried a back page election advertisement which simply read "BEWARE OF THE NELSON CONTINGENT".
93. NC 19 October 1860 warned the "workers of Nelson" against the aristocratic and despotic "Stafford Clique".
94. See NE 10 December 1856, for results of the 1856 Superintendency elections.
95. McIntosh, Marlborough, pp. 209-212. Eyes was later to become the fifth superintendent of Marlborough from 1865 to 1870. Weld was elected in 1861 for Cheviot against the opposition of the Lyttleton Times which regarded him as a Nelson and Stafford "nominee". LT 6, 23 and 27 February 1861. Weld was a Catholic and found his religion often a handicap, especially in the wasp-ish atmosphere of Nelson. See Herron, Structure and Course of Politics, p. 250; Wood, "The Electorate's Verdict", Feel of Truth, p. 152.
96. NE 25 July 1860.

The opposition to the Stafford ministry tended to coalesce into a caucus led by the "Three F's": William Fox, who was regarded as the "leader of the opposition", Isaac Featherston, the Wellington superintendent, and William Fitzherbert. The nucleus of the opposition caucus was provided by a clique of Wellington politicians⁹⁷ who were successful as a faction in Wellington Provincial politics. The opposition of the Wellington clique to Stafford may be explained in terms of a Wellington v. Nelson provincial rivalry; however the 1858 New Provinces Act, passed in their absence, which detached the prosperous Hawkes Bay districts from their provincial control, provided them with a compelling reason for opposing Stafford and a cause with which to rally support. The Nelson Colonist tended to support the Fox clique because of their common opposition to both the Stafford clique and the New Provinces Act. Because the opposition in the Assembly was based on the repeal of the New Provinces Act, which protected the run-holding interests in Marlborough from the Nelson Provincial government, the Nelson representatives had an added reason for supporting Stafford and the Government.

Little really needs to be said about the Nelson members' speeches on the Taranaki war in the 1860 Assembly. The opinions they expressed differed, even in details, only slightly from one another, and, not surprisingly, paralleled the opinions expressed by the Nelson Examiner, the mouthpiece of the Stafford clique. The Nelson representatives, as supporters of the Government, merely embellished and developed the arguments put forward by C.W. Richmond in opening the debate on the Native Offenders Bill on 3 August.

97. The members of the clique were: Alfred Brandon, C.R. Carter, Charles Clifford (the Speaker of the House of Representatives), Featherston, Fitzherbert, Fox, A.W. Renall, and W.B. Rhodes.

Two basic assumptions lay behind the Government's case. The first was that Kingi was acting as the leader of a Taranaki land league, and the second, that the Maoris were attempting to throw off British authority and had to be put down vigorously before the disaffection spread. Wiremu Kingi, Richmond and Government supporters argued, was a rebel chief, who neither asserted nor possessed any title to the land offered by Teira, but had objected to the sale as the leader of the Taranaki land league; the Governor had not gone to war with Kingi, but, by his "contumacious defiance", Kingi had gone to war with the Governor. Little attempt was made to understand Maori customs; the humanitarians' contention that Kingi's tribal rights had been ignored was countered by the argument that to recognize native rights based on chieftainship would be to admit "might was right"; the Maori concept of "mana" was not understood, being interpreted as "the right of the strong over the weak" and "nothing but the old savage rule of the strong hand; strength on one side and fear of that strength on the other."⁹⁸ In any case, it was argued, any rights Kingi may have possessed were submerged by the fact of his rebellion; the question had become whether Kingi had the right to offer armed resistance to a peaceful survey of land, whether or not the land had been fairly purchased.⁹⁹ To Dr Monro, Land League and King Movement were but different names for the same thing and indicated the growth in the Maori mind of a "feeling of independence and insubordination, and contempt for the authority of Government." Kingi used the Waitara purchase as a pretext for challenging the Government. Though

98. See in particular: PD, 1858-60, p. 200, Weld; p. 212, Domett. See also Domett in NE 8 December 1860, address to public meeting.

99. PD 1858-60, p. 226, Stafford. Also loc.cit., pp. 253-254, debate between Fox and Richmond over whether the survey should have begun before the purchase was completed.

the Waitara purchase was no doubt valid, the land dispute was really insignificant alongside the fact of native rebellion.¹⁰⁰ The only policy possible was the vigorous prosecution of the war until the Queen's supremacy was re-established.¹⁰¹

The weak point of the Government's case was the assumption that Kingi was acting as the leader of a Taranaki Land League, the existence of which has since been shown to be a myth.¹⁰² Its strongest argument was to point to the existence of a native rebellion in the Colony and to argue "that the welfare of both races of Her Majesty's subjects peremptorily requires a vigorous prosecution of the war to a successful conclusion."¹⁰³ On the vigorous prosecution of the war even the parliamentary opponents of the Government's war policy were agreed and revealed the weakness of their opposition.¹⁰⁴ Government supporters were well aware of the opposition's reluctance to take their argument, that the invalidity of the Waitara purchase made the war unjust, to its logical conclusion. Weld twitted Featherston,

It is incomprehensible to me, Sir, how anyone can at once say that the war is unjust and yet urge its vigorous prosecution

and the opposition on its refusal to vote at all on Stafford's resolution affirming the culpability of Wiremu Kingi and urging the vigorous prosecution of the war.¹⁰⁵

100. PD, 1858-60, p. 339.

101. The Government's case was first stated by Richmond, PD, 1858-60, pp. 178-187. The major contributions by the Nelson members to the debates on the war and native affairs were: PD, 1858-60, pp. 200-202, Weld; pp. 211-214, Domett; pp. 223-228, Stafford pp. 255-258, 338-339, Monro.

102. Sinclair, The Maori Land League, pp. 27-39.

103. PD, 1858-60, p. 322, Stafford. See also loc.cit., pp. 255, 338, Monro.

104. See for example: PD, 1858-60, pp. 186, 345, Carleton; pp. 188, 195, Forsaith; p. 222, Featherston.

105. PD, 1858-60, pp. 334-335. For Stafford's resolution see loc.cit., p. 322.

Realizing that the weakness of the Government's position lay in its attempt to justify the Waitara purchase, both the Nelson representatives and the Nelson Examiner became impatient with the debates on the origins and justice of the war. The colony being in flames, it was time to stop talking and get on with the fighting.¹⁰⁶ The Examiner felt the Government was making too many concessions to their opponents on the question of the justice of the war, and thus giving the impression of being men without strong convictions. Indeed, there was a simple justification for the war: reason and argument having failed with the Maoris, "right is ascertained by might", the only possible tribunal in this case was the battle-field, and thus it would be better for all if the issue was decided quickly.¹⁰⁷ The editor of the Examiner counselled the Government to avoid discussion of the justice of the war, and to emphasise the fact that the Queen's authority had been blatantly resisted, murders had been committed, and plundering had occurred. In this way, the editor thought, the ministers would

rally around them their supporters upon broad and intelligible grounds, instead of provoking discussions upon questions which must wait for their solution until open insurrection has been trodden down and extinguished. 108

The debates on native affairs in the 1860 General Assembly may be divided into three phases. The first phase, concerned mainly with the origins and justice of the war, began with the debate on the Native Offenders Bill, which proposed a trade embargo against the disaffected tribes, and lasted from 3 August, when the Bill was moved by C.W. Richmond, until the withdrawal of the Bill on 25 September.¹⁰⁹ During this first phase there

106. PD, 1858-1860, pp. 255, 258, Monro; p. 334, Weld.

107. NE 29 August 1860.

108. NE 19 September 1860.

109. PD, 1858-60, pp. 178-230, 384-389, 466-497, 575-583.

was also the debate on Carleton's motion for a select committee of inquiry into the circumstances leading to war,¹¹⁰ which ended in the decision to call Archdeacon Hadfield and Donald McLean to the Bar of the House to give evidence.¹¹¹ At the conclusion of the Hadfield-McLean hearing, Stafford moved, on 16 August, his resolution affirming the justice of Gore Browne's action at Waitara and urging the vigorous prosecution of the war.¹¹² The second phase, almost concurrent with the first, revolved around the debate on twelve resolutions moved by Henry Sewell on 10 August. The resolutions attempted to set out some principles for future native policy,¹¹³ and were finally adopted in a very watered down form on 14 September.¹¹⁴ The Assembly's flagging interest in the native question was suddenly revived by the news that the Imperial Parliament was debating a bill to set up a Native Council for New Zealand. On 2 October Fox proposed a remonstrance against Imperial interference in colonial affairs, a select committee of both Houses was set up to discuss the remonstrance and to consider a colonial scheme for a Native Council. An alternative Native Council Bill was drawn up and passed by the Assembly on 1 November.¹¹⁵ However the Assembly had been rather precipitous in its action, for even before the local Native Council Bill was passed it was learnt that the Imperial Parliament had in fact thrown out its Native Council Bill, before the original news of the Bill had even reached New Zealand.¹¹⁶ The speed and unanimity with which the Assembly

110. PD, 1858-60, pp. 232-245, 251-270.

111. PD, 1858-60, pp. 269-270.

112. For the Hadfield-McLean hearing see: PD, 1858-60, pp. 285-306. For the debate on Stafford's resolution see: loc.cit., pp. 321-345.

113. See PD, 1858-60, pp. 283-284.

114. PD, 1858-60, pp. 271-284, 307-320, 351-362, 365-375, 459-464, 497-501, 514-516.

115. PD, 1858-60, pp. 610-625, 628-629, 656-657, 702-705, 785-787, 802.

116. Morrell, British Colonial Policy, pp. 250-255; Dalton, War and Politics, pp. 119-121.

passed the Native Council Act, creating an advisory Native Council,¹¹⁷ and accepting ministerial responsibility in native affairs,¹¹⁸ granted the threat of Imperial interference, may be seen as a demonstration of the basic agreement on the native question of the majority of the members.

There was an element of unreality in the debates on native affairs as if neither the Government nor the Opposition was convinced of its own arguments. Significantly, the Opposition did not question ministerial statements about the Land League or the King Movement but tended to attack the Government for taking the initiative, in various ways, in beginning the war on questionable grounds. The Wellington clique were not humanitarians or any more sympathetic towards the Maori than some of the Government supporters or ministers; their opposition to the Government's war policy was merely political, a move in their political game against the Stafford clique. For instance Henry Sewell noted that the Wellington members took part in debates on native affairs only when "they were roused by some opportunity for a faction fight."¹¹⁹

* * * *

117. A majority of twenty had previously rejected Sewell's resolution calling for the establishment of a Native Council, see PD, 1858-60, pp. 365-374.

118. The Stafford ministry had consistently opposed any attempt to change the existing administration of native affairs. Dalton, War and Politics, pp. 32-40, 120; Sinclair, Origins of the Maori Wars, pp. 94-95.

119. Sewell, Journal, iv, p. 110, 19 August 1860.

The meeting of the General Assembly provided a great deal of information on the origins of the war and on the problems of native policy, both in the past and for the future. However, the Nelson newspapers did not interpret and disseminate this information impartially. The two Nelson newspapers followed the proceedings closely. Both published reports of the debates, both printed, often at great length, the speeches of many of the members, and both reprinted, usually in full, some of the official papers presented to the Assembly. Given the partisan nature of the newspapers it is, perhaps, not very surprising that much of the reporting and commenting was one-sided. Speeches of opponents were simply not reported at all, or else they were published in very abbreviated form. In its reports of the debates in the General Assembly the Examiner gave lengthy extracts or reprinted in full the speeches of Government supporters, contenting itself with passing mention of the Opposition speakers.¹²⁰ The Examiner explained its policy thus:

We shall confine ourselves to noticing those parts only which strike us as throwing any fresh light upon the subjects, or as putting the facts already known in a new point of view. 121

In this respect the Colonist had a better record. Its editor, being more reluctant to comment on the issues raised by the debates on native affairs, was content to fill many of his editorials with factual reports or extracts of speeches made from both sides of the House. The Colonist tended to save

120. See for example: NE 22 August, 1 September, 15 September 1860. Editorials on the debate on the Native Offenders Bill. Sometimes editorials consisted of extracts from speeches.

121. NE 15 September 1860.

most of its harsh comments for the Nelson representatives' attitude to provincial issues, for example on the Nelson Provincial Council sponsored bill for Land in Compensation of Nelson Settlers, which the Nelson clique in the Assembly supported only half-heartedly.¹²² The Nelson newspapers were provided with the information it had demanded before the Assembly met, their reaction and interpretation of this information was determined, like their reaction to the military conduct of the war, by their position on political issues both in the province and in the larger political arena provided by the Assembly.

Both the Examiner and the Colonist, in common with the members of the General Assembly and the majority of the settlers, were agreed that the war was an Imperial war and should be prosecuted vigorously. Both accepted without question the Government's rationalization that Wiremu Kingi was acting as the leader of the Taranaki Land League. To the Colonist, Kingi was "a contumacious native chief - a member of the continually increasing anti-land-selling league".¹²³ The editor of the Examiner saw the Land League as part of a conspiracy by the Taranaki Maoris to drive the English into the sea.¹²⁴

Though the Colonist accepted the premise that Kingi was acting as a land leaguer it was less willing to accept the Government's conclusion from

122. NC 5 October and 19 October 1860. The bill was to provide compensation for immigrants affected by the failure of the New Zealand Company to fulfill its promises, and mainly involved compensating free passage immigrants who were unable to find work when they arrived in Nelson in the eighteen-forties. See PD 1858-60, pp. 417-422, 605-606.

123. NC 28 September 1860.

124. NE 5 September 1860. See also NE 19 September and 26 September 1860.

this, that Kingi was acting illegally and was challenging the authority of the Crown. It was not convinced that the Government, with its land league argument, had answered the doubts raised by Bishop Selwyn and William Martin as to the validity of the Waitara purchase.¹²⁵ By accusing Kingi of being a land leaguer the Government was merely avoiding the difficult question of native land rights. The editor of the Colonist supported the idea of a judicial enquiry into the nature of native land rights and to investigate "what ways the natives can legally enter into combinations to refuse to sell any more land to the Government without calling into question the supremacy of the Crown."¹²⁶ The Colonist even went further and, accepting William Martin's interpretation of the Maori King Movement,¹²⁷ regarded the King Movement as little more than the decision of the Waikato Maoris "to make a stand against what the natives considered to be the alienation of their territorial possessions."¹²⁸ It may be suggested that the Colonist's liberal attitude towards the Maori Land League and Maori combinations against land selling was a reflection of its anti-landowning and working-class leanings. The term "league" and "aboriginal trade unionism" would have less evil connotations to the readers of the Colonist than they would have for the more genteel and land-owning readers of the Examiner.¹²⁹ The intention of the Colonist was to show the inadequate

125. NC 19 June and 18 September 1860.

126. NC 19 June 1860.

127. See: AJHR, 1860, E-1, pp. 27-29; William Martin, The Taranaki Question, (1860), pp. 90-91.

128. NC 18 September 1860. See also NC 2 October 1860. For a modern interpretation of the King Movement that agrees with the Colonist see: Sinclair, Origins of the Maori Wars, pp. 75-76; M.K.P. Sorrenson, "The Maori King Movement, 1858-1885", Studies of a Small Democracy, pp. 33-39.

129. For the connotations placed on "league", "combination", and "trade unionism" by the colonial gentry, see: Sinclair, Maori Land League, pp. 39-43.

grounds upon which the war was begun, and to breakdown the Government's argument that it was started to defend British sovereignty.

Teira's offer of the Waitara, the Colonist argued, was merely a move in a Taranaki tribal feud which Kingi countered by refusing to sell. Further, the Colonist continued, Gore Browne should have been aware that he was being involved in a tribal dispute,¹³⁰ though he was in a dilemma:

He had to decide whether he would fight with the dissatisfied settlers with his Native Commissioner at their head, or avail himself of the proffered sale of a portion of land which he knew was a matter of dispute between the party wishing to sell and W. King. 131

Kingi's resistance to the survey of the disputed piece of land, not completely unjustifiable, should have been treated the same way as the resistance to railway surveys in England - the riot act rather than a declaration of war should have been read to Kingi and his "band of harmless old women."¹³² Gore Browne had allowed himself to be forced into the war by interested agitators, namely the Taranaki land-sharks.¹³³

The Colonists' argument, then, was that the war had been entered into on inadequate grounds: the validity of the purchase was in doubt, the title to the land was disputed; the Land League was of doubtful illegality and could not be used to turn Kingi into a rebel. Wiremu Kingi was a rioter, if anything, rather than a rebel against British authority. Gore Browne, "goaded on by a clique",¹³⁴ had over-responded to Kingi's action and had

130. NC 21 September 1860. The Colonist referred to Gore Browne's despatch of 29 March 1859 given to AJHR, 1860, E-3, pp. 2-3. See also Sinclair, Origins of the Maori Wars, pp. 141-142.

131. NC 21 September 1860.

132. NC 2 April 1861.

133. NC 28 September 1860

begun the war while the armed forces in the colony were insufficient.¹³⁵ By claiming the Governor had been influenced by interested settlers the Colonist was able to attack the Stafford ministry which it described as a Taranaki "family compact" joined by the "Nelson Contingent",¹³⁶ from "the stronghold of run-holders, merchants, and, though last, not least, of money-lenders."¹³⁷ The Stafford ministry was criticized for failing, as the Governor's advisers, to make itself master of the native problem¹³⁸ and was blamed for "a war of races, which, in self-justification, it has been asserted must inevitably have come on some time...."¹³⁹ However, in blaming the Stafford ministry for the war, the Colonist soon found itself in a dilemma.

It had been assumed that being an Imperial war all the expenses would be paid by the Imperial Government.¹⁴⁰

the mother country ... is bound, not only to take upon itself all the cost, charge, and expense incident to such a state of things, but amply to compensate the various European settlers for any losses they may sustain during the contest between its representative and the native population. 141

Both William Fox, the Opposition leader, and the Nelson Examiner had assumed Britain would pay the cost of the war, but both had emphasised the Governor's complete responsibility for the war because the Colonial ministry had no

135. NC 28 September 1860.

136. NC 2 April and 11 June 1861.

137. NC 11 June 1861.

138. NC 18 September 1860.

139. NC 23 November 1860.

140. Henry Sewell was one of the few who thought it was absurd to think the Imperial Government would pay for the war. Sewell, Journals, iv, p. 67, 21 May 1860.

141. NC 1 June 1860.

share in the administration of native affairs.¹⁴² The Examiner reminded its readers that as long as the colony did not demand the management of native affairs the expenses of the war would be borne by the British Government.¹⁴³ It was important to maintain the idea that the war was a "war not of the settlers, but of the British Government."¹⁴⁴ In emphasising the Stafford ministry's role in forcing the Governor to proceed with the purchase of disputed land, and in rejecting the Government's case based on the illegality of the Land League, the editor of the Colonist found it more difficult to maintain the fiction of an Imperial war to uphold British sovereignty rather than a settlers' war to acquire land, a war for which the colony would have to accept at least some responsibility and expenses. That the Colonial Office was gradually beginning to think along these lines was made apparent in Lewis's despatch to Gore Browne presented to the General Assembly on 25 September.¹⁴⁵ Just as the editor of the Examiner had attempted to rationalize the lack of military success by blaming incompetent military commanders, the editor of the Colonist blamed the war on the British Government because it had appointed incompetent Governors:

the British Government cannot escape the responsibilities of its own acts, so much increased by the incompetency of most of those sent out to govern the colonies, and the grasping selfishness of many of the interested advisers chosen by such Governors. 146

142. Fox to Godley, 5 May 1860, Canterbury Papers. NE 26 May, 25 July, 19 September 1860.

143. NE 29 September 1860.

144. NE 19 September 1860.

145. G.C. Lewis to Gore Browne, 26 July 1860, AJHR, 1860, E-3B, pp. 6-7.

146. NC 12 October 1860. The editor was commenting on Lewis's despatch which was published by the Colonist on 9 October.

In this way the Colonist attempted to attack the Stafford clique while denying the war was a colonial war, the costs of which would have to be borne by the colony.¹⁴⁷

When the detested Stafford ministry finally fell from power in July 1861¹⁴⁸ the Colonist was able to concentrate its attack on the Governor.¹⁴⁹ Some of these attacks were marked by a certain virulence: once the editor alluded to Walpole's son drowning himself because he was incapable in office and reminded Gore Browne that his career had been "inefficient, inglorious and disastrous."¹⁵⁰ The Colonist made no attempt to disguise its pleasure when news was received that Gore Browne had been recalled:

No one can rejoice more than ourselves that Gore Browne has to quit the field, and we care not who may replace him; a worse one we could not have - a man who would neither fight nor let it alone - who drifted into this inglorious, but expensive war, 151

The antipathy of the Colonist towards Gore Browne may thus be explained partly as a by-product of the Colonist's attack on the Stafford clique, for which the Governor's predilections were well known. Further, it may be explained by the Colonist's disillusionment in the war policy, and concern, once it was obvious that the war would not be a quick and cheap solution to the native problem, to saddle the British Government with the responsibility and expenses of the war.

147. NC 9 July 1861.

148. For comments see NC 12 July 1861.

149. See: NC 12 July, 23 July, 6 August, 9 August, 13 August and 20 August 1861.

150. NC 23 July 1861.

151. NC 20 August 1860.

The Colonist did not object to war with the Maori as such. It did not find the "patched up" peace in 1861 congenial,¹⁵² and it warmly applauded the recommencement of hostilities¹⁵³ and the invasion of the Waikato in 1863.¹⁵⁴ Nor did it oppose the war policy out of sympathy for the Maori or on humanitarian grounds. The lack of an immediate or quick victory enabled the Colonist to attack the Stafford ministry for encouraging the Governor to enter to adopt the war policy before it could be applied decisively.¹⁵⁵ The editor of the Colonist was astute enough to see that he could use the arguments of the humanitarians, Selwyn and Martin, to charge the Government with not only an unsuccessful, but an unjust and unnecessary war.

Though the lack of success was conceded and attributed to the incompetence of the military commanders, the Nelson Examiner did not accept the argument that the war was unjust and unnecessary. As the mouthpiece of the Stafford ministry the Examiner strove to justify the Government's policy and to answer the Government's information which enabled the Examiner to argue the Government's case with greater conviction - it now at least had some idea what the Government's case was. The Examiner kept the war issue and native affairs at the forefront of the Nelson settlers' attention: few editorials during 1860 and 1861 were on any subject unconnected with the war or native policy. Moreover, it was not only the local settler the Examiner was trying to convince, but the British public as well. It is possible that the

152. NC 9 August 1861.

153. NC 12 May and 9 June 1863.

154. NC 18 September 1863.

155. NC 28 September 1860.

importance the editor attached to the native question was a reflection of his concern that the Government's, and the colonists', case was heard in Britain.

While the Assembly was in session the Examiner did little more than echo the opinion of the Government supporters in the Assembly. Though it was admitted that the Taranaki settlers had for a long time looked enviously at the land at Waitara it was claimed that the dispute was not over land. The Government's argument that Kingi had no rights to the land offered by Teira was accepted.¹⁵⁶ A Buddle's pamphlet was regarded as a good history of the native question and ~~as having shown~~ that the Land League and the King Movement were both indications that the Maoris were intending to throw off British authority.¹⁵⁷ In an attempt to discredit Archdeacon Hadfield, it was claimed that "a Native League to prevent the sale of any more land to the Government had been formed at Otaki" under the influence of Hadfield.¹⁵⁸ To the editor of the Examiner there was little doubt as to the object of the war; it was

to put down an insurrection which disturbs the peace of the country which we inhabit, to secure to us protection against savage outrage and aggression, to protect our lives and properties, and to maintain that ascendancy of British law without which the colony would be uninhabitable by civilized people....¹⁵⁹

The Examiner was sure that the Maoris were in revolt; what was at issue

156. NE 19 September 1860.

157. T. Buddle, The Maori King Movement in New Zealand, (1860). NE 25 August 1860. For a discussion of Buddle's pamphlet and the part it played in the Government's arguments see: Sinclair, The Maori Land League, pp. 8-26.

158. NE 26 September 1860.

159. NE 19 December 1860.

was not a piece of disputed land but British sovereignty over the North Island.

However, the question of land title and the Waitara purchase still had to be debated. Late in 1860 William Martin's The Taranaki Question was published and early in 1861 came the Government's reply: Notes on Sir William Martin's 'The Taranaki Question'. The Examiner devoted a series of six editorials, between 16 January and 2 February, to discuss the question. Many of the editorials¹⁶⁰ were mainly extracts from Martin's pamphlet countered by statements from the Government's Notes. The claim was made, appealing to the authority of Busby, Hobson, Fitzroy, Grey and Richmond, that Maori tribal rights just did not exist.¹⁶¹ The argument that the only rights recognized by the Maoris were those based on the will of the strongest^{was} repeated.¹⁶² The Examiner came down on the side of the Government and claimed that Martin and other philo-Maoris were defending Kingi "upon an elaborate theory of native rights, and upon his own privileges as a British subject", but that Kingi himself had rejected these rights and privileges by hoisting "the flag of Maori independence."¹⁶³ The editor returned to the argument that the Government was engaged in suppressing a native rebellion and pointed out that the Maori advocates, by their writings and speeches, were giving the Maoris "a great moral assistance to their cause, and ... encourage them to persist in their rebellion."¹⁶⁴

160. NE 19 January, 23 January, 26 January 1861 especially.

161. NE 23 January 1861.

162. NE 26 January 1861.

163. NE 2 February 1861.

164. NE 2 February 1861. See also NE 26 January and 30 January 1861.

Further proof that the Maoris were attempting to set up an alternative authority was thought to be given in the speech of the Hawkes Bay chief, Renata, in November 1860, when he claimed the Governor was in the wrong because Gore Browne had refused to allow the Maori King to adjudicate the Waitara dispute.¹⁶⁵ By March 1861 it had become clear that the real enemy was not Wiremu Kingi but the Maori King; the Examiner interpreted the proposal, made in February, by Waikato chiefs not directly involved in the war, to make peace on the conditions of setting up a judicial inquiry into the Waitara purchase, as an example of the Maori's assertion of the "spirit of independence and savage freedom" and the assumption by the King Movement of their right to sit in judgement on the Government's actions.¹⁶⁶

The Examiner's argument, then, was that the justice of the Government's war policy did not depend on the validity of the Waitara purchase. The war was not over land but over sovereignty. The question of native land rights was unimportant, and the land dispute insignificant, beside the fact of a native rebellion. In order to establish the supremacy of lawful authority and to suppress armed rebellion the war was both necessary and just. Indeed, this was the Stafford clique's apologia for the war. Stafford, addressing a public meeting in Nelson upon his re-election in 1861, said -

It has been asserted by those who oppose the present Government, that the war now unfortunately existing at Taranaki was entered into by the Government in order to obtain a paltry 600 acres of land. So monstrous and absurd a charge as that a Government would coolly plunge a country into a civil war on grounds so unjust for an object so despicable carries its own denial - its most signal refutation on the face of it.

165. NE 12 January 1861.

166. NE 13 March 1861.

Stafford went on to argue that the Maoris had forced the Governor into the war by their acts of rebellion.¹⁶⁷

The Examiner's explanation of the war in terms of a native rebellion being suppressed, though not very decisively, by the Governor supported by the Colonial ministry, allowed it to deny any colonial responsibility for the war and its expenses. When responsible government was introduced into New Zealand in 1856 the control of native affairs was reserved to the Crown acting through its agent, the Governor, who could act upon or reject advice given to it by the colonial ministry. By arguing that the Governor had been forced into the war by a native rebellion, the Stafford ministry and the Examiner could avoid the question of responsibility altogether. They could claim that the rebellion was a manifestation of the state of the native mind,¹⁶⁸ or of the native attitude towards colonization.¹⁶⁹ Native rebellion could be considered an inevitable consequence of colonization.¹⁷⁰ Other, perhaps more rational, reasons could be given for the rebelliousness of the Maori, which would still leave the colony free of responsibility: the misrule of previous governors influenced by "a maudlin pseudo philanthropy";¹⁷¹ the parsimonious policy of the Colonial Office leading to the British failure to uphold authority by force from the beginning of colonization.¹⁷² In any case ministerial responsibility could be disclaimed as long

167. Stafford, 12 January 1861, NE 16 January 1861.

168. NE 11 April 1860.

169. Stafford to Godley, 28 May 1860, Canterbury Papers.

170. PD, 1858-60, p. 338, Monro.

171. Weld to Godley, 18 July 1860, Canterbury Papers.

172. PD, 1858-60, pp. 257-258, Monro.

as the ministers could only advise the Governor on native affairs. As long as the colony did not claim control of native affairs it could avoid the costs of native policy and of the war.¹⁷³ It is not surprising that the Examiner consistently argued against transferring the control of native affairs to the Colonial Government.

If we aspire after a complete independence, and wish to add a Minister of Foreign Affairs to manage our relations with the Aborigines, we shall first do well to sit down and count the costs. ¹⁷⁴

By arguing that the war was not over a piece of land but over British sovereignty in the North Island, the Examiner could claim that the war was "not of the settlers but of the British Government"¹⁷⁵ and that "the cost of putting down the native insurrection ... rests with the mother country, and not with us." ¹⁷⁶

It has been shown above that the two Nelson newspapers were agreed that the war was an Imperial responsibility but differed in their interpretations of the causes of the conflict. The Colonist saw the conflict as a land dispute escalated into an unjust and unnecessary war by an incompetent Governor advised by selfish ministers. The Colonist used the doubts on the validity of the Waitara purchase, casted by the humanitarian critics of the war, to attack its political opponents, the Stafford clique. On the other hand, the Examiner, as a supporter of Stafford, took a more imperialistic view of the war, and justified the Governor's action and the ministry's

173. NE 25 July, 19 September, 29 September 1860.

174. NE 29 September 1860. See also: NE 16 March 1861.

175. NE 19 September 1860.

176. NE 25 July 1860.

policy by appealing to the seditious attitude of the Maori population.

The Government had not involved itself in a land dispute but was suppressing a native rebellion and upholding the Queen's supremacy. The Examiner's argument that the real issue of the war was British authority rather than native land rights explains its attitude to the ending of the Taranaki war in March 1861.

The end of the fighting in Taranaki was not regarded by either of the Nelson newspapers as the coming of peace. The Colonist had only "slender confidence which a temporary peace, patched up by ministers and scarcely regarded by the natives, afford".¹⁷⁷ However, the end of the fighting, the editor of the Colonist argued, offered the opportunity to settle the question of native rights: a mixed commission should be set up to discuss and clarify the meaning of the Treaty of Waitangi.¹⁷⁸ Though he was later to support wholeheartedly the Waikato invasion¹⁷⁹ the editor hoped that every effort would be made to improve race relations and warned that

no family compact should be permitted to exist in Taranaki or elsewhere, however extensive it may be, or whatever opportunities (ministerial or otherwise) it may possess, capable at any moment, for their own selfish ends, of embroiling the two races. 180

To the editor of the Examiner the end of the fighting in Taranaki would allow the real issue to be faced. No end to the war was possible until

177. NC 9 August 1861.

178. NC 2 April 1861. See also NC 6 September 1861.

179. NC 9 June, 28 July and 18 September 1863.

180. NC 2 April 1861.

the Maori was completely defeated, and the editor looked forward to "its speedy transfer to some fresh locality, and its renewal on a larger scale and with greater activity"¹⁸¹ The peace terms offered to the Maoris by the Governor were seen as part of a policy to enable the renewal of hostilities unhindered by doubts caused by a questionable land purchase.¹⁸² The leniency towards the Atiawa, from whom no compensation was to be demanded, and the intention to resume investigations into the title of the land offered by Teira, were interpreted by the Examiner as recognition that the Atiawa had been fighting in a cause some Europeans had encouraged them to feel to be just, and as the Government's confidence that the Waitara purchase would prove to be valid.¹⁸³ The demand for compensation and the handing over of murderers made on the Southern Taranaki tribes, though in fact unrealistic, was welcomed by the editor, who urged the enforcement of the terms on the Maoris by confiscating their lands.¹⁸⁴ The decision to treat the Waikato Maoris separately was seen as a shrewd move by the Governor to divide the opposition so that the Waikato and the southern tribes could be dealt with separately and more effectively.¹⁸⁵ The stage was thus set for asserting the "paramount authority of the British Crown" by impressing on the native mind the subjugation of the Maori to British law and a conviction of British sovereignty and the Queen's supremacy.¹⁸⁶ However, the editor was to be dismayed and disappointed by the withdrawal of troops from Taranaki to Auckland before the southern Taranaki tribes had been punished.¹⁸⁷

181. NE 13 April 1861.

182. NE 10 April 1861.

183. NE 20 April 1861.

184. NE 24 April and 27 April 1861.

185. NE 10 April 1861.

186. NE 13 April and 27 April 1861.

187. NE 24 April 1861.

The attitudes of the Examiner on the peace terms offered to the Taranaki Maoris were consistent with its argument that the Government had been fighting in Taranaki to uphold British authority rather than to enforce a land sale. The title to the disputed land was to be investigated, the Atiawa who could claim to be defending their land rights could be treated leniently. Those who had fought against the British for no other reason than their membership of Land Leagues or King Movement were to be punished as rebels. However, the demand for the punishment of the south Taranaki Maoris by confiscating their land not only showed that the Examiner did not appreciate the fact that the centre of interest was shifting to the Waikato, but reveals his basic concern was for land acquisition. Further, his dismay at the transfer of troops from Taranaki to Auckland as part of Gore Browne's determination to deal with the Waikato suggests the editor's unrealistic expectations of a war on two fronts; the disillusionment of the year long unsuccessful Taranaki campaign did not seem to have tempered the editor's belief in the superiority of the European and his arms.

* * * *

It has been argued above that the contrasting opinions and approaches of the Nelson newspapers on the Taranaki conflict in 1860 may be understood against the background of local and colonial politics. Further, it has been suggested that the political conflict was not between parties based on principles, either constitutional or of race relations, but was fought between opposing factions striving for power either in the province, or in the colony, or in both. During the provincial period, the political struggles may best be described as faction politics rather than party politics. In Nelson, as in most other provinces, the newspapers were mouthpieces of provincial factions. What was unusual about Nelson was that one of the provincial factions was "in" power at the colonial level, while the other provincial faction was "in" at the local level. Thus the Examiner supported both the Stafford ministry and the provincial opposition; the Colonist supported the Provincial "ministry" and opposed the Colonial Government. The opinion on the Taranaki war held by the Nelson newspapers was determined less by racial attitudes or humanitarian concerns than by the possession and location of power of the faction each represented. This was particularly so in the case of the Examiner.

It is suggested, then, that the consistent support of the Colonial Government by the Examiner and its anxiety to justify the Government's war policy may be explained by Stafford's possession of power at the centre of colonial politics. The Examiner supported the Government because the Government was in the possession of the Stafford clique. It is not surprising that the Examiner withdrew its support when the Stafford ministry was defeated in July 1861 and replaced by a ministry headed by William Fox. What is, perhaps, more significant is that on the fall of the Stafford

ministry the Examiner felt it was time for a reconsideration "of the gains and losses of union or separation",¹⁸⁸ and had concluded that separation was preferable to being ruled by an Auckland-Wellington ministry.¹⁸⁹

Early in 1860 the Examiner had opposed the separation of the two islands proposed by Henry Sewell and the Lyttleton Times as a solution to the divided interests and problems of the two islands, and to safeguard the South Island provinces' land funds.¹⁹⁰ Without an interest in maintaining its land fund intact (the area of available land in Nelson being almost exhausted) separation would not be in the interests of Nelson as she would be placed in a subordinate position to the two southern giants.¹⁹¹ The offer that Nelson would be capital of the South Island was not enough¹⁹² - Nelson preferred to be the capital of the whole colony (not just part of it).¹⁹³ Moreover, with Stafford firmly in power in the Central Government since 1856, Nelson interests were being well taken care of, and separation represented a positive threat to Nelson power and influence.¹⁹⁴

188. NE 28 September 1861.

189. NE 24 August 1861.

190. Sewell in LT 18 January 1860. LT 25 January, 1 February, 4 February, 15 February 1860. OW 24 March 1860. Sewell to Hall, 23 November 1860, Hall Papers.

191. NE 21 March 1860.

192. See for instance PD, 1856-57, p. 17, Sewell. South Island support for Nelson's claim as capital was so that when separation occurred the capital would be permanently established there. The purpose of this is not very clear and the interpretation of it as a bait to gain Nelson support for separation is obvious.

193. NE 10 March and 17 March 1860.

194. LT 1 February 1860, suggests this as the reason for Nelson's opposition to separation.

On 21 March 1860 the Examiner had argued that the separation of the two islands would threaten the interests of Nelson; a year and a half later, on 21 August 1861, the editor was arguing that the interests of Nelson were so threatened that their protection demanded "moving for a separation." During the intervening eighteen months it had become obvious that there would be no quick and easy solution to the native problems afflicting the North Island. The war, which had been welcomed as a cheap and decisive solution, had ended in a stalemate, leaving the native population in an even more agitated and rebellious mood than before the war had started. Nor was it any longer possible to believe the colony could disclaim any financial liability. The Colonial Office had dropped enough hints that the colonists should not assume the Imperial authorities' willingness to pay the costs of war.¹⁹⁵ Further, the colony could no longer plea insolvency, for the discovery of gold had increased its ability to pay.¹⁹⁶ Thus the North Island native problem remained as a hungry beast, threatening the lives of the North Island settlers and demanding to be fed with the resources of the South Island.

However, what was probably more important to the editor of the Examiner was that the South Island, Nelson, or more specifically the Stafford clique the Examiner represented, no longer controlled the purse strings or the policy making in the central government. The North Island colonists had "combined sentimental philanthropy and missionary vanity, party opposition and selfish views of profit" to remove the Stafford ministry and Governor Gore Browne from power.¹⁹⁷ The North Island had given little consideration

195. NE 24 August 1861. See also: Morrell, British Colonial Policy, pp. 264-269.

196. NE 28 September 1861.

197. NE 2 October 1861.

to national interests; removing the Stafford ministry at a time when unity was so necessary.¹⁹⁸ The disaster was complete with the re-appointment of the autocratic Grey, who had "always looked for instruments rather than associates."¹⁹⁹ The South could no longer be sure of dictating a solution to the native problem that would safeguard its own interests.

Now we in this Island have, for a long time, been looking on with great interest at the game which is now being played out at Auckland by the parties who are contending for the management of the natives; we have criticised the moves, we have taken sides with the players; we have blamed this plan, we have advocated that, until all at once we find that the game is to be played at our expense; and that whichever party wins will come to us for the stakes. 200

The Examiner was no longer interested in a game the outcome of which it could no longer be sure of influencing.²⁰¹

Though the Examiner listed the same arguments for separation as were given by Sewell in 1860 and later to be given by the Otago separationists: the divided interests of the two islands;²⁰² the differences of climate, geology and population of the two islands;²⁰³ the injustice of taxing the gold-digging population for purposes they have no interest in;²⁰⁴ the neglect of South Island interests and problems by a Maori-phobic central government;²⁰⁵ However, the real reason for the Examiner's change of

198. NE 13 July 1861.

199. NE 12 August 1861. The Examiner had hoped that the position would have been saved by Gore Browne remaining governor and thus controlling Fox. NE 27 July 1861.

200. NE 21 September 1861.

201. NE 19 October 1861.

202. NE 24 August 1861.

203. NE 25 September 1861.

204. NE 28 September 1861.

205. NE 6 November 1861.

heart over separation was the capturing of the central government by the Wellington clique headed by Fox.²⁰⁶ The Examiner championed the separation cause not because of altruistic concern for South Island interests but as a manoeuvre in the battle for control of the central government and of the colony's resources.

Significantly, the Colonist favoured the Fox ministry²⁰⁷ although it realized the ministry was unlikely to have any Nelson members.²⁰⁸ Further, the Colonist argued against separating the two islands²⁰⁹ pointing out that the West Indian colonies' experiences demonstrated the dangers of local self-government without a strong general government.²¹⁰ The Colonist warned its readers to expect more activity in provincial affairs by the "Nelson bread-and-butter politicians" now that they had lost power in Auckland,²¹¹ and urged Nelson to support its "working-man's superintendent."²¹²

As the Colonist had predicted the Examiner with the approach of the elections for superintendent, began to take a more active interest in local affairs.²¹³ Indeed, the Examiner began to argue in favour of strengthening

206. For the Examiner's reaction to Fox's victory see NE 13, 17, 20, 24, 27 July and 3 August 1861. Note for three weeks the editor devoted his time to discrediting the Fox ministry.

207. NC 12 July and 27 September 1861.

208. NC 26 July 1861.

209. NC 29 October 1861.

210. NC 5 November 1861. For the West Indian situation see: Morrell, British Colonial Policy, pp. 377-452; P.D. Curtin, Two Jamacias, (1955), pp. 178-203.

211. NC 11 October 1861.

212. NC 22 November 1861.

213. NE 5 October, 6 November, 4, 7, 12 and 18 December 1861.

local governments²¹⁴ and in an editorial discussing the relative merits of centralism and provincialism came out strongly in support of provincialism, which would enable "the wealth of the provinces to stay where it is made." ²¹⁵ It is apparent, then, that the former "centralist" leanings of the Examiner and the newly acquired taste for a strong central government of the Colonist were results of changes in the power game of colonial politics.

The opinions of the Nelson newspapers on the political issues of the day were not determined by political principles, the rivalries were not over the location of power, native policy, nor the unity of the colony. The struggle was for the possession of power and the control of the purse strings, both provincial and central.

214. NE 7 September 1861.

215. NE 11 September 1861.

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